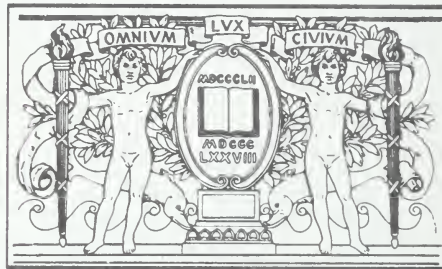


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January 1–April 30, 1777

Paul H. Smith, Editor

Gerard W. Gawalt, Rosemary Fry Plakas, Eugene R. Sheridan  
Assistant Editors

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON 1980



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## Editorial Method and Apparatus

In its treatment of documents this edition of delegate letters strives to achieve a middle ground between facsimile reproduction and thorough modernization. The original spelling and grammar are allowed to stand except in cases where editorial changes or insertions are required to make the text intelligible. For example, when a badly misspelled word is misleading, the correct spelling is inserted in roman type in brackets after the word. Moreover, words omitted through oversight have been supplied at appropriate places in italic type in brackets. Obvious slips of the pen and inadvertent repetitions are usually corrected silently. Capitalization and punctuation have been standardized according to certain conventions. Each sentence begins with a capital letter, as do all proper and geographic names as well as days of the week and months of the year. Doubtful cases have been resolved in favor of modern usage; otherwise the usage of the original texts has been followed. Generally, abbreviations, contractions, and monetary signs are preserved as they appear in manuscript except when they are ambiguous or misleading. On the other hand, the thorn and the tilde are consistently expanded. "Ye" always appears as "The," for instance, and "recvd" as "received." Likewise, "pr." and "p̄" are always expanded to "per," "pre," or "pro," as the case demands. Finally, superscript letters are always lowered to the line.

Gaps in the text are indicated by ellipses in brackets for missing words and by blank spaces in brackets for missing numbers. Conjectural readings are supplied in roman type in brackets, and editorial insertions in italic type in brackets. Material canceled in manuscript but restored to the printed text is included in italic type in angle brackets ("square parentheses"). Marginalia in letters are treated as postscripts, and postscripts which appear without explicit designation are supplied with a *P.S.* in brackets. Documents are arranged chronologically, with more than one document of the same date being arranged alphabetically according to writer. Documents dated only by the month or by the year are placed at the end of the respective month or year. Place-and-date lines always appear on the same line with the salutation regardless of their position in the manuscript.

A descriptive note at the foot of each entry provides abbreviations indicating the nature and location of the document when it was

copied for this project, except for privately owned manuscripts whose ownership is fully explained. The descriptive note also contains information on the document's authorship if explanation is necessary, and endorsements or addresses are quoted when they contain more than routine information. Other editorial practices employed in this work are explained in the sections on editorial apparatus which follow.

#### TEXTUAL DEVICES

The following devices will be used in this work to clarify the text.

[. . .], [. . . .]	One or two words missing and not conjecturable.
[. . .] <sup>1</sup> , [. . . .] <sup>1</sup>	More than two words missing; subjoined footnote estimates amount of material missing.
[     ]	Number or part of a number missing or illegible.
[     ] <sup>1</sup>	Blank space in manuscript; explanation in subjoined footnote.
[roman]	Conjectural reading for missing or illegible matter; question mark inserted if reading is doubtful.
[ <i>italic</i> ]	Editorial insertion in the text.
< <i>italic</i> >	Matter crossed out in manuscript but restored.

#### DESCRIPTIVE SYMBOLS

The following symbols are used in this work to describe the kinds of documents drawn upon. When more than one symbol is used in the descriptive note, the first to appear is that from which the main text is taken.

RC	recipient's copy
FC	file copy
LB	letterbook copy
MS	manuscript
Tr	transcript (used to designate not only contemporary and later handwritten copies of manuscripts, but also printed documents)

#### LOCATION SYMBOLS

The following symbols, denoting institutions holding the manuscripts printed in the present volume, are taken from *Symbols of American Libraries*, 11th ed. (Washington: Library of Congress, 1976).

CShH	Henry E. Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.
Ct	Connecticut State Library, Hartford



CtHi	Connecticut Historical Society, Hartford
CtY	Yale University, New Haven, Conn.
DLC	Library of Congress
DLC(ESR)	Library of Congress, Early State Records Collection
DNA	National Archives
DNDAR	Daughters of the American Revolution, Washington, D.C.
DeHi	Historical Society of Delaware, Wilmington
M-Ar	Massachusetts Archives, Boston
MA	Amherst College, Amherst, Mass.
MH-H	Harvard University, Houghton Library
MHi	Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston
MWA	American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.
MdAA	Maryland Hall of Records, Annapolis
MdAN	United States Naval Academy, Annapolis
MdBJ-G	John Work Garrett Library, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md.
MdHi	Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore
MeHi	Maine Historical Society, Portland
MiDbEI	Edison Institute, Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Vil- lage Library, Dearborn, Michigan
MiU-C	William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
N	New York State Library, Albany
NHi	New-York Historical Society, New York
NHpr	Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, N.Y.
NN	New York Public Library
NN-B	New York Public Library, Berg Collection
NNC	Columbia University, New York
NNF	Fordham University, New York
NNPM	Pierpont Morgan Library, New York
Nc-Ar	North Carolina State Department of Archives and History, Raleigh
NcU	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
Nh-Ar	New Hampshire Division of Archives and Records Man- agement, Concord
NhD	Dartmouth College, Hanover, N.H.
NhHi	New Hampshire Historical Society, Concord
NjGbS	Glassboro State College, Glassboro, N.J.
NjHi	New Jersey Historical Society, Newark
NjMoHP	Morristown National Historical Park, Morristown, N.J.
NjR	Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J.
OCIWHi	Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland, Ohio
OHi	Ohio Historical Society, Columbus
PHC	Haverford College, Haverford, Pa.

PHarH	Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg
PHi	Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
PPAmP	American Philosophical Society, Philadelphia
PPIn	Independence National Historical Park, Philadelphia
PPL	Library Company of Philadelphia
PPRF	Rosenbach Foundation, Philadelphia
PSC	Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, Pa.
PU	University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
R-Ar	Rhode Island State Archives, Providence
RHi	Rhode Island Historical Society, Providence
RNH	Newport Historical Society, Newport, R.I.
ScHi	South Carolina Historical Society, Charleston
TxU	University of Texas, Austin
Vi	Virginia State Library, Richmond
ViHi	Virginia Historical Society, Richmond
ViU	University of Virginia, Charlottesville

## ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES

Abbreviations and short titles frequently cited in the present volume are identified below.

Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield)

Adams, John. *Diary and Autobiography of John Adams*. Edited by Lyman H. Butterfield et al. 4 vols. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1961.

Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield)

Butterfield, Lyman H., et al., eds. *Adams Family Correspondence*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1963-.

Adams, *Writings* (Cushing)

Adams, Samuel. *The Writings of Samuel Adams*. Edited by Harry A. Cushing. 4 vols. Boston: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904-8.

Adams, *Works* (Adams)

Adams, John. *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States . . .* Edited by Charles Francis Adams. 10 vols. Boston: Charles C. Little and James Brown, 1850-56.

*Am. Archives*

Force, Peter, ed. *American Archives: Consisting of a Collection of Authentick Records, State Papers, Debates, and Letters and Other Notices of Publick Affairs*. 4th series, 6 vols. 5th series, 3 vols. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1837-53.

Burnett, *Letters*

Burnett, Edmund C., ed. *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*. 8 vols. Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921-36.

## DAB

*Dictionary of American Biography.* Edited by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone.

Evans, *Am. Bibliography*

Charles Evans. *American Bibliography.* 12 vols. Chicago: Privately printed, 1903-34.

Jay, *Papers* (Morris)

Jay, John. *John Jay, the Making of a Revolutionary: Unpublished Papers, 1745-1789.* Edited by Richard B. Morris et al. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

## JCC

U.S. Continental Congress. *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789.* 34 vols. Edited by Worthington C. Ford et al. Washington: Library of Congress, 1904-37.

Jefferson, *Papers* (Boyd)

Jefferson, Thomas. *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson.* Edited by Julian P. Boyd et al. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950-.

*Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*

New York. *Journals of the Provincial Congress, Provincial Convention, Committee of Safety and Council of Safety of the State of New York, 1775-1777.* 2 vols. Albany: T. Weed, 1842.

## Md. Archives

*Archives of Maryland.* Edited by William H. Browne et al. Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, 1883-.

Morgan, *Naval Documents*

Morgan, William James, et al., eds. *Naval Documents of the American Revolution.* Washington: Department of the Navy, 1964-.

## N.C. State Records

North Carolina. *The State Records of North Carolina.* Edited by Walter Clark. Vols. 11-26. Winston and Goldsboro, N.C.: M.I. and J.C. Stewart et al., 1895-1914.

## N.H. State Papers

New Hampshire. *Provincial and State Papers.* 40 vols. Concord, 1867-1943.

## NYHS Collections

*Collections of the New-York Historical Society.*

## OED

*Oxford English Dictionary.*

## Pa. Archives

*Pennsylvania Archives.* 9 series. 119 vols. in 120. Philadelphia: J. Sevnerns & Co., 1852-56; Harrisburg: State printer, 1874-1935.

## Pa. Council Minutes

Pennsylvania. *Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, from its Organization to the Revolution.* 6 vols. [*Colonial Records of Pennsylvania*, vols. 11-16] Harrisburg: Theo. Fenn & Co., 1852-53.



Paullin, *Marine Committee Letters*

Paullin, Charles O., ed. *Out-Letters of Continental Marine Committee and Board of Admiralty, 1776-1780*. 2 vols. New York: Printed for the Naval History Society by the De Vinne Press, 1914.

PCC

Papers of the Continental Congress. National Archives and Records Service. Washington, D.C.

PMHB

*Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.

PRO

Public Record Office. London.

Rush, *Letters* (Butterfield)

Rush, Benjamin. *Letters of Benjamin Rush*. Edited by Lyman H. Butterfield. 2 vols. Princeton: Published for the American Philosophical Society by Princeton University Press, 1951.

Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*

Shipton, Clifford K. *Biographical Sketches of Those Who Attended Harvard College*. Sibley's Harvard Graduates. Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1873-.

Warren-Adams *Letters*

*Warren-Adams Letters, Being Chiefly a Correspondence among John Adams, Samuel Adams and James Warren*. 2 vols. Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, vols. 72-73. Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1917-25.

Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick)

Washington, George. *The Writings of George Washington*. Edited by John C. Fitzpatrick. 39 vols. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931-44.

Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*

Wharton, Francis, ed. *The Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence of the United States*. 6 vols. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889.

## Acknowledgments

To the Library of Congress, the Congress of the United States, and the Ford Foundation this edition owes its existence. It is fitting, therefore, that we take this opportunity to acknowledge the foresight of the Library's administration in planning a timely and comprehensive observation of the American Revolution Bicentennial, of the Congress in funding a Bicentennial Office in the Library, and of the Ford Foundation in making a generous grant in support of this project as a scholarly contribution to the celebration of the Bicentennial era. It is with the most profound gratitude that the editors acknowledge their appreciation to all those who bore responsibility for the decisions that made possible these contributions. Our appreciation is also extended to the innumerable persons who have contributed to enriching the holdings of the Library of Congress to make it the premier institution for conducting research on the American Revolution.

The photocopies of the more than 20,000 documents that have been collected for this project have been assembled through the cooperation of several hundred institutions and private persons devoted to preserving the documentary record upon which the history and traditions of the American people rest, and it is to their work that a documentary publication of this nature should ultimately be dedicated. Unfortunately, the many individual contributors to this collecting effort cannot be adequately recognized, but for permission to print documents appearing in the present volume, we are especially grateful to the following institutions: the American Antiquarian Society, American Philosophical Society, Amherst College, British Museum, William L. Clements Library, Columbia University, Connecticut Historical Society, Connecticut State Library, James S. Copley Library, Dartmouth College, Daughters of the American Revolution (Washington, D.C.), Historical Society of Delaware, Fordham University, John Work Garrett Library, Glassboro State College, Greenfield Village & Henry Ford Museum, Harvard University, Haverford College, Henry E. Huntington Library, Independence National Historical Park, Maine Historical Society, Maryland Hall of Records, Maryland Historical Society, Massachusetts Archives, Massachusetts Historical Society, Pierpont Morgan Library, Morristown National Historical Park, National Archives, New Hampshire Division of Archives and Records Management, New Hampshire Historical Society, New Jersey Historical Society, Newport Historical Society, New-York Historical Society, New York Public Library, New York State Library, North Carolina State Depart-

ment of Archives and History, University of North Carolina, Ohio Historical Society, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, University of Pennsylvania, Library Company of Philadelphia, Public Record Office (London), Rhode Island Historical Society, Rhode Island State Archives, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library, Rosenbach Foundation, Rutgers University, South Carolina Historical Society, Swarthmore College, University of Texas, United States Naval Academy, Virginia Historical Society, Virginia State Library, University of Virginia, Western Reserve Historical Society, The Royal Archives (Windsor Castle), and Yale University. And in addition we express our thanks and appreciation to the following persons: Mr. Sol Feinstone, Mr. Ronald von Klaussen, and Capt. J.G.M. Stone.

This work has benefitted not only from Edmund C. Burnett's path-finding 8-volume edition of *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress* but also from the generous cooperation of the editors of several other documentary publications with a common focus on the revolutionary era. From them the Library has borrowed heavily and to them it owes a debt it can never adequately acknowledge. It is a pleasure to give special thanks to the editors of the papers of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Laurens, James Madison, and George Washington. Finally, we owe thanks to the historians who have served on the Advisory Committee on the Library's American Revolution Bicentennial Program, and especially to Mr. Julian P. Boyd, Mr. Lyman H. Butterfield, and Mr. Merrill Jensen, who generously act as an advisory committee for the *Letters* project.

Paul H. Smith  
American Revolution Bicentennial Office  
Manuscript Division



## Chronology of Congress

JANUARY—APRIL 1777

- January 1 Appoints Benjamin Franklin commissioner to the Court of Spain.
- January 3 Directs General Washington to investigate and protest General Howe's treatment of Congressman Richard Stockton and other American prisoners.
- January 6 Denounces Howe's treatment of Gen. Charles Lee and threatens retaliation against prisoners falling into American hands.
- January 8 Authorizes posting continental garrisons for the defense of western Virginia and financing Massachusetts' expedition against Fort Cumberland, Nova Scotia.
- January 9 Dismisses John Morgan, director general of military hospitals, and Samuel Stringer, director of the northern department hospital.
- January 14 Adopts proposals to bolster Continental money and recommends state taxation to meet state quotas.
- January 16 Proposes appointment of a commissary for American prisoners held by the British; orders inquiry into British and Hessian depredations in New York and New Jersey.
- January 18 Orders distribution of authenticated copies of the Declaration of Independence containing the names of signers.
- January 24 Provides money for holding an Indian treaty at Easton, Pa.
- January 28 Appoints committee to study the condition of Georgia.
- January 29 Directs Joseph Trumbull to conduct an inquiry into activities of his deputy commissary Carpenter Wharton.

- January 30      Creates standing committee on appeals from state admiralty courts.
- February 1      Orders measures for suppressing insurrection in Worcester and Somerset counties, Maryland.
- February 5      Orders measures for obtaining troops from the Carolinas; instructs Secret Committee on procuring supplies from France.
- February 6      Directs measures for the defense of Georgia and for securing the friendship of the southern Indians.
- February 10     Recommends temporary embargo in response to British naval "infestation" of Chesapeake Bay.
- February 12     Recommends inoculation of Continental troops for smallpox.
- February 15     Endorses the substance of the recommendations adopted at the December-January New England Conference and recommends the convening of two similar conferences in the middle and southern states.
- February 17     Endorses General Schuyler's efforts to retain the friendship of the Six Nations.
- February 18     Directs General Washington to conduct inquiry into military abilities of foreign officers.
- February 19     Elects five major generals.
- February 21     Rejects General Lee's request for a congressional delegation to meet with him to consider British peace overtures; elects 10 brigadier generals.
- February 22     Resolves to borrow \$13 million in loan office certificates.
- February 25     Adopts measures to curb desertion.
- February 26     Raises interest on loan office certificates from 4% to 6%.
- February 27     Cautions Virginia on expeditions against the Indians: adjourns to Philadelphia, to reconvene on March 5.

- March 5–11 Fails to attain quorum; on March 11 urges Delaware and New York to dispatch delegates to Congress.
- March 12 Reconvenes.
- March 13 Cautions agents abroad against recruiting foreign officers with limited English language skills; appoints committee “to confer with General Gates upon the general state of affairs.”
- March 15 Reprimands General Schuyler for comments “highly derogatory to the honour of Congress.”
- March 17–18 Adjourns for lack of a quorum—only eight states represented.
- March 19 Appoints committee on applications of foreign officers for military appointments; declines Baron deKalb’s offer of service.
- March 21 Appoints committee to confer with Gen. Nathanael Greene.
- March 22 Establishes and specifies the organization and duties of the office of secretary of Congress.
- March 24 Informs General Washington that Congress never intended him to feel bound by a majority in a council of war contrary to his own judgment.
- March 25 Urges Virginia to suspend operations planned against her western Indians; directs General Gates to take command of the army at Fort Ticonderoga; appoints William C. Houston deputy secretary of Congress.
- March 26 Suspends Esek Hopkins from his command of the Continental Navy.
- March 29 Reaffirms decision not to send a delegation to confer with General Lee.
- April 1 Adopts plan for “better regulating the pay of the army.”

- April 4      Adopts commissary reforms recommended by General Greene.
- April 7      Adopts plan to reorganize the medical department.
- April 8      Adopts proposals to honor the memory of Generals Joseph Warren and Hugh Mercer.
- April 10     Orders measures for the defense of the western frontiers and appoints Gen. Edward Hand to the command at Fort Pitt.
- April 11     Appoints William Shippen, Jr., director general of military hospitals and a new staff of physicians and surgeons general.
- April 14     Adopts measures to improve recruiting and revises Articles of War.
- April 16     Urges Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut to attack the British forces at Rhode Island.
- April 18     Resolves to publish report on depredations; appoints committee to conduct inquiry into General Schuyler's command.
- April 21     Resumes debate on Articles of Confederation.
- April 22     Orders William Franklin into close confinement in retaliation for his urging Americans to seek royal pardons.
- April 25     Orders measures for reinforcing and mobilizing General Washington's army.
- April 29     Orders measures for the defense of Lake Champlain and Ticonderoga.
- April 30     Appoints committee to evaluate the consequences of the British raid on Danbury; adopts quartermaster and commissary general reforms.

## List of Delegates to Congress

This section lists both the dates on which delegates were elected to terms falling within the period covered by this volume and the inclusive dates of their attendance. The former are generally ascertainable from contemporary state records, but the latter are often elusive bits of information derived from the journals of Congress or extrapolated from references contained in the delegates' correspondence, and in such cases the "facts" are inevitably conjectural. It is not possible to determine interruptions in the attendance of many delegates, and no attempt has been made to record interruptions in service caused by illness or brief trips home, especially of delegates from New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania living within easy access of Congress. For occasional references to such periods of intermittent service as survive in the correspondence and notes of various delegates, see the index under individual delegates. Until fuller information is provided in a consolidated summary of delegate attendance in the final volume of this series, the reader is advised to consult Burnett, *Letters*, 2:xxxix-lxxiii, for additional information on conjectural dates of attendance. Brief biographical sketches of all the delegates are available in the *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1971*, and fuller sketches of more than half of the delegates can be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*.

### CONNECTICUT

*Eliphalet Dyer*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Did not attend January-April 1777

*Samuel Huntington*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Did not attend January-April 1777

*Richard Law*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Did not attend January-April 1777

*Roger Sherman*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Attended: January 3 to April 30, 1777

*William Williams*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Did not attend January-April 1777



*Oliver Wolcott*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

## DELAWARE

*John Dickinson*

Elected: November 8, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*John Evans*

Elected: November 8, 1776

Did not attend Congress

*George Read*

Elected: November 8, 1776

Attended: March 12-29?; April 25?-30, 1777

*James Sykes*

Elected: February 22, 1777

Attended: April 4-18? 1777

*Nicholas Van Dyke*

Elected: February 22, 1777

Did not attend January-April 1777

## GEORGIA

*Nathan Brownson*

Elected: October 9, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*Button Gwinnett*

Elected: October 9, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Lyman Hall*

Elected: October 9, 1776

Attended: January 1 to February 11? 1777

*John Houstoun*

Elected: October 9, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*George Walton*

Elected: October 9, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777 (Remained in Philadelphia with Executive Committee during January; on mission to Indian treaty at Easton during February)

## MARYLAND

*Charles Carroll, Barrister*

Elected: November 10, 1776

Attended: January 1-19? 1777

*Charles Carroll of Carrollton*

Elected: February 15, 1777

Did not attend January–April 1777

*Samuel Chase*

Elected: November 10, 1776; February 15, 1777

Attended: January 1? to February 27, 1777

*Thomas Johnson*

Elected: November 10, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*William Paca*

Elected: November 10, 1776; February 15, 1777

Attended: January 16? to February 27? 1777

*Benjamin Rumsey*

Elected: November 10, 1776; February 15, 1777

Attended: February 17–?; April 8?–30, 1777

*William Smith*

Elected: February 15, 1777

Attended: February 18?–27; April 2?–30, 1777

*Thomas Stone*

Elected: November 10, 1776; February 15, 1777

Did not attend in 1777

*Matthew Tilghman*

Elected: November 10, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

#### MASSACHUSETTS

*John Adams*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Attended: February 4 to April 30, 1777

*Samuel Adams*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*Francis Dana*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Did not attend January–April 1777

*Elbridge Gerry*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*John Hancock*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*James Lovell*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Attended: February 4 to April 30, 1777

*Robert Treat Paine*

Elected: November 15, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

*Josiah Bartlett*

Elected: December 24, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Nathaniel Folsom*

Elected: April 1, 1777

Did not attend in April 1777

*George Frost*

Elected: April 1, 1777

Did not attend in April 1777

*Matthew Thornton*

Elected: December 24, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*William Whipple*

Elected: December 24, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

## NEW JERSEY

*Abraham Clark*

Elected: November 30, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 14, 1777

*Jonathan Elmer*

Elected: November 30, 1776

Attended: January 3? to February 14; March 13 to April 30, 1777

*Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant*

Elected: November 30, 1776

Attended: January 1 to February 25; March 19? to April 2; April 12?–30, 1777

*Richard Stockton*

Elected: November 30, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*John Witherspoon*

Elected: November 30, 1776

Attended: January 1–18?; February 7?–26; March 14? to April 30, 1777

## NEW YORK

*George Clinton*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Did not attend in 1777

*James Duane*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: April 16-30, 1777

*William Duer*

Elected: March 29, 1777

Attended: April 7-30, 1777

*William Floyd*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: March 17? to April 26? 1777

*John Jay*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Did not attend in 1777

*Francis Lewis*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777 (Remained in Baltimore on Marine Committee business until returning to Philadelphia on April 13)

*Philip Livingston*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: April 16-30, 1777

*Robert R. Livingston*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Did not attend in 1777

*Lewis Morris*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: February 21 to April 25, 1777

*Philip Schuyler*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Attended: April 7-30, 1777

*Henry Wisner*

Elected: April 21, 1775

Did not attend in 1777

## NORTH CAROLINA

*Thomas Burke*

Elected: December 20, 1776

Attended: February 4 to April 30, 1777

*Joseph Hewes*

Elected: December 20, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*William Hooper*

Elected: December 20, 1776

Attended: January 1 to February 4, 1777

## PENNSYLVANIA

*George Clymer*

Elected: July 20, 1776; February 22, 1777

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777 (Remained in Philadelphia with Executive Committee, January–February)

*Benjamin Franklin*

Elected: July 20, 1776; February 5, 1777

Did not attend in 1777

*William Moore*

Elected: February 5, 1777

Declined, February 6, 1777

*Robert Morris*

Elected: July 20, 1776; February 5, 1777

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777 (Remained in Philadelphia with Executive Committee, January–February)

*John Morton*

Elected: July 20, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Daniel Roberdeau*

Elected: February 5, 1777

Attended: March 12 to April 30, 1777

*George Ross*

Elected: July 20, 1776

Attended: January 16?–28? 1777

*Benjamin Rush*

Elected: July 20, 1776

Attended: January 24 to February 27, 1777

*James Smith*

Elected: July 20, 1776

Attended: January 16? to February 27? 1777

*Jonathan Bayard Smith*

Elected: February 5, 1777

Attended: March 12 to April 30, 1777

*George Taylor*

Elected: July 20, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*James Wilson*

Elected: July 20, 1776; February 22, 1777

Attended: January 1–3?; January 28? to April 30, 1777

## RHODE ISLAND

*William Bradford*

Elected: October 28, 1776

Did not attend Congress



*William Ellery*

Elected: May 4, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*Stephen Hopkins*

Elected: May 3, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

## SOUTH CAROLINA

*Thomas Heyward*

Elected: February 16, 1776; January 10, 1777

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*Henry Laurens*

Elected: January 10, 1777

Did not attend January–April 1777

*Thomas Lynch, Jr.*

Elected: March 23, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Arthur Middleton*

Elected: February 16, 1776; January 10, 1777

Attended: January 21? to April 30, 1777

*Charles Pinckney*

Elected: January 21, 1777

Did not attend in 1777

*Edward Rutledge*

Elected: February 16, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*John Rutledge*

Elected: February 16, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Paul Trapier*

Elected: January 21, 1777

Did not attend Congress

## VIRGINIA

*Benjamin Harrison*

Elected: October 10, 1776

Attended: January 1 to April 30, 1777

*Thomas Jefferson*

Elected: June 20, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

*Francis Lightfoot Lee*

Elected: June 20, 1776

Attended: January 1 to February 27; April 2–30, 1777

*Richard Henry Lee*

Elected: June 20, 1776

Attended: January 1 to February 27; April 2?–30, 1777

*Thomas Nelson*

Elected: June 20, 1776

Attended: January 1–30?; April 23?–30? 1777

*Mann Page*

Elected: December 4, 1776

Attended: January 30 to February 27; April 8–30, 1777

*George Wythe*

Elected: June 20, 1776

Did not attend in 1777

## Illustrations

### Map of Baltimore

endpapers

"Ville, port, et rade de Baltimore dans le Maryland. 1781?" Military map in pen-and-ink and watercolor, drawn by an engineer with the French army commanded by General Rochambeau, whose headquarters was located at Charles and Mulberry streets while his troops were en route to the Yorktown campaign. Shows fortifications, troop encampments, and roads from "White Marsh," "Frederick Town," and "Spuriens."

Rochambeau Map Collection, No. 13, Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress.

### The Henry Fite House

56

John Adams described the Fite house as "the last House at the West End of Market Street, on the South Side of the Street. A long Chamber, with two fire Places, two large Closets, and two Doors. The House belongs to a Quaker, who built it for a Tavern." The meeting place of Congress from December 20, 1776, to February 27, 1777.

Courtesy of the Peale Museum, Baltimore, Maryland.

### Goddard Broadside of the Declaration of Independence

172

On January 19, 1777, over six months after approving the Declaration of Independence, Congress resolved that "an authenticated copy of the Declaration of Independency, with the names of the members of Congress subscribing the same, be sent to each of the United States, and that they be desired to have the same put upon record." The honor of printing the first copy of the Declaration with the names of the signers fell to Mary Katharine Goddard, the printer of the *Maryland Journal*. In addition to being the first printed version of the Declaration to list the signers' names, this broadside is also marked by one other distinguishing characteristic—the still unexplained omission of the name of Thomas McKean of Delaware, which is probably the result of nothing more portentous than an oversight by the printer.

Courtesy of the Hall of Records, Department of General Services, State of Maryland.

### Resolves on the New England Convention

280

These resolves reflect three of the vexing problems Congress confronted throughout the Revolution—currency depreciation, price inflation, and

state sovereignty. All three issues simultaneously appeared on the congressional agenda in consequence of a convention of New England states which met at Providence between December 25, 1776, and January 2, 1777, and forwarded to Congress its resolves on the defense of Rhode Island, the regulation of prices, and the depreciation of paper currency. Almost at once a sharp difference of opinion arose among the delegates over the validity of the meeting itself, with Samuel Adams arguing for one side that "a right to assemble upon all occasions to consult measures for promoting liberty & happiness was the privilege of all *freemen*" and John Adams countering for the other that as "the committee from the 4 New Engd States have touched upon continental Subjects, therefore the *meeting* stands in need of the approbation of Congress." Equally as divisive was the issue of price regulation. Although some delegates like Samuel Chase argued that regulating prices was justified on the grounds of necessity—"The mines of Peru would not support a war at the present high price of the necessities of life"—others like James Wilson contended that controlling prices would be a futile effort to avoid the workings of inexorable economic laws—"There are certain things sir which Absolute power cannot do." Eventually, as the resolves of February 15 indicate, Congress attempted to reconcile these conflicting points of view by rejecting the notion that the New England convention itself required congressional approbation, while cautiously approving the convention's resolves on defense and currency depreciation and referring its plan for price regulation to the middle and southern states for their consideration.

Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Library of Congress.  
LC-USZ62-66969

Benjamin Rush

324

Although he attended their deliberations less than six months, Benjamin Rush is one of the better known delegates to Congress and signers of the Declaration of Independence. A Philadelphia physician, educated at the College of New Jersey, the College of Philadelphia, and Edinburgh University, he is probably better known for his medical writings and zeal for humanitarian reform. Rush's brief political career began with his election to the Pennsylvania Provincial Conference in June 1776, a few months after his marriage to Julia, daughter of New Jersey delegate Richard Stockton. He was not elected to Congress until after the Declaration had been adopted, but he took his seat two weeks before the engrossed document was returned for signing and remained in attendance until Congress evacuated Philadelphia in December. After a few weeks attending Washington's sick and wounded troops during the most intense days of the New Jersey campaign, he joined Congress at Baltimore, where he penned several letters and notes of debate that constitute an important source of information on Congress' activities during the delegates' tenure

in Baltimore. His congressional career ended when Congress adjourned to Philadelphia at the end of February, and in April he was appointed surgeon-general of the middle department, where he remained until January 1778. His feud with William Shippen, Jr., director general of hospitals, and subsequent criticism of Washington's leadership, in a famous letter to Patrick Henry, brought his military and political career to a close, whereupon he resumed his medical practice in Philadelphia and through his medical lectures and writings became perhaps the most widely known physician of his generation in America.

Mezzotint by St. Memin, 1802. Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress. LC-Z62-64712

#### Abraham Clark's Motion on Washington's Proclamation

412

Abraham Clark was a radical political leader from New Jersey who throughout his career in Congress abhorred the growth of military authority and encroachments on state sovereignty. To Clark, General Washington's January 25, 1777, proclamation—which required all those who had recently declared their fidelity or sworn their allegiance to the king to take an oath of allegiance to the United States or else withdraw themselves and their families behind British lines—was a threat on both counts. He therefore offered this motion to rebuff an extension of military jurisdiction in New Jersey, the area most affected by Washington's action. A committee of Congress sharply disagreed with Clark's assessment of Washington's proclamation, arguing that "considering the situation of the Army [it] was prudent and necessary," but Congress tabled the committee's report in order to avoid a potentially divisive debate. Undeterred by the committee's rebuke, Clark remained concerned about encroachments on individual rights from whatever the source. As he explained to the Speaker of the New Jersey Assembly: "We set out to Oppose Tyranny in all its Strides, and I hope we shall persevere."

Papers of the Continental Congress, item 36, 1:4, National Archives and Records Service.

#### Thomas Burke

426

Thomas Burke, who served as a North Carolina delegate to Congress from 1777 to 1781, was one of the foremost defenders of state sovereignty during the era of the American Revolution. An Irish immigrant who came to North Carolina and prospered as a doctor and lawyer, Burke anticipated by more than a century the Actonian dictum that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. "The delusive intoxication which power naturally imposes on the human mind," he once warned, "inevitably leads to an abuse & corruption of power, & is in my humble opinion the proper object of political vigilance & jealousy." In the Dickinson draft of the Articles of Confederation, Burke perceived great



potential abuse in the loosely worded article defining the rights of the states, which in his view “left it in the power of the future Congress or General Council to explain away every right belonging to the States, and to make their own power as unlimited as they please.” As a result, he won congressional approval of a highly significant amendment to the Articles that transferred the locus of sovereignty from Congress to the states and guaranteed that under the Confederation Congress’ powers over the states would be strictly limited. As the war spread to the south, however, Burke came to regret some of the restrictions on Congress’ authority and tried in vain to win for it the right of taxation.

Woodcut courtesy of the North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

#### Richard Stockton

455

Richard Stockton was a political moderate who represented New Jersey in Congress during the latter months of 1776. A graduate of the College of New Jersey who went on to become a successful lawyer, a member of the royal council of New Jersey, and a justice of the New Jersey Supreme Court, Stockton was so alarmed by the prospective disruption of the British empire that in December 1774 he submitted a plan of reconciliation to Lord Dartmouth, the secretary of state for the colonies, designed to stave off “the *certain* consequences of this unnatural War . . . dreadful to both Great Britain and America; and the *probable* effects thereof . . . fatal to the whole British Empire.” As the possibility of Anglo-American reconciliation faded and the movement for independence grew stronger, Stockton cast his lot with the revolutionary party in New Jersey and was elected to Congress in June 1776. In addition to voting for and signing the Declaration of Independence, Stockton distinguished himself during his brief time in Congress by his work on numerous ad hoc committees dealing with military and naval affairs as well as by his service as a commissioner to the army in the northern department. Shortly after his return from this mission near the end of 1776, he was captured by the British in New Jersey and—perhaps because of harsh treatment by his captors or because of his own moderate views—signed an oath of allegiance to the king. Although he repudiated this oath after his release, Stockton, his health broken, never again held public office. He died of cancer in 1781.

Portrait attributed to John Wollaston. Courtesy of Princeton University.

#### Matthew Thornton

532

Matthew Thornton, a native of Ireland, had served in the New Hampshire provincial legislature from 1758 to 1775 before his election to Congress. Although he did not take his seat in Congress until November 1776, he was nevertheless permitted to affix his signature to the Declara-

tion of Independence, thereby becoming the delegate whose name appears last on the document. A physician in Londonderry, N.H., he was one of four doctors and eight foreign born delegates who signed the Declaration. After six months of inconspicuous service in Congress, Thornton returned home to sit on the bench of the New Hampshire Superior Court until 1782, after which he served a two-year term in the state senate.

Painting by N. B. Onthank. Courtesy of the New Hampshire Historical Society.

#### Resolves of Congress on Pennsylvania's Defense

580

Congress again became alarmed for the safety of Pennsylvania in April 1777 when Gen. Israel Putnam, reporting on recent movements of General Howe's forces in New Jersey, suggested that the British might be contemplating the capture of Philadelphia. A committee was therefore appointed to confer with Pennsylvania officials, but since many delegates were concerned about the possible collapse of the state's government and the determination and ability of its citizens to resist invasion, steps were also taken to insure that Pennsylvania's paralysis did not fatally undermine the defense of the middle colonies. Accordingly, Congress, asserting its "indispensible duty" to intervene and declaring the executive authority of Pennsylvania "incapable of any exertion adequate to the present crisis," published a series of resolves of April 14 and 15 exhorting "the good people of Pennsylvania chearfully to submit" to whatever emergency measures Congress and the Pennsylvania Council jointly deemed necessary.

Rare Book and Special Collections Division. Library of Congress.  
LC-USZ62-66968

#### Benjamin Rumsey's April 17, 1777, letter to Thomas Johnson

605

Benjamin Rumsey was born in Cecil County, Md., and educated at the College of New Jersey. Active in Maryland's struggle against British authority, he served as a member of the Maryland Convention and the Council of Safety in 1775 and 1776, and held a colonel's commission in the Harford County militia. He was elected a delegate to Congress in the autumn of 1776 and almost simultaneously was appointed a commissioner to encourage the reenlistment of Maryland soldiers. In Philadelphia he attempted to compromise a dispute between Maryland and Congress over the terms his state wished to offer men to reenlist, and he frequently busied himself with the details of supplying Maryland companies marching through Philadelphia en route to join Washington's army. He attended Congress only a few days during his sojourn in Baltimore but resumed his seat after the delegates returned to Philadelphia before leaving in May, when Maryland seemed to be threatened from another quarter. Concerned over the state's ability to pacify three eastern shore counties where loyalists threatened the stability of the new state government and encouraged a

British invasion of the Chesapeake, he was successful in securing the posting of a Continental battalion on the Maryland eastern shore to overawe the "disaffected." After attending Congress at York, Pa., a few weeks during the autumn of 1777, Rumsey returned to Maryland where he took a seat on the Maryland Court of Appeals, which he held until his retirement in 1805.

Courtesy of the Hall of Records, Department of General Services, State of Maryland.

George Walton

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George Walton, who was born in Virginia and raised by an uncle after being orphaned at an early age, moved to Georgia in 1769 and soon became a successful lawyer. First elected to Congress in February 1776, Walton arrived in Philadelphia at the end of June, just in time to become one of the youngest signers of the Declaration of Independence. During his first term in Congress, until October 1777, Walton proved to be a diligent worker and served on a number of key committees, including the Board of Treasury, Executive Committee, and Marine Committee, but despite his industry he remained a secondary figure among the delegates. Although he was instrumental in securing the appointment of Lachlan McIntosh as commander of the Georgia Continental line in 1777, Walton later joined the movement to remove the general, both during his term as governor of the state in 1779–80 and during his second term in Congress in 1780–81. He continued to be active in public life after the conclusion of peace, serving variously as congressional Indian agent, Georgia chief justice, governor, and superior court justice, and United States senator.

Miniature portrait by Charles Wilson Peale, watercolor on ivory. Courtesy of the Mabel Brady Garvan Collection, Yale University Art Gallery.

LETTERS OF DELEGATES  
6  
January 1–April 30, 1777  
TO CONGRESS





## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Baltimore Jany 1. 1777

I am determind to omit no opportunity of writing to you although I have very seldom of late receivd a Letter from you. Your second Favor came to my hands a few days ago, inclosing Copies of Papers from Spain. I am much obligd to you for them. Our Affairs in Europe look well, and additional Measures have been taken here, to establish them in that Part of the World on a solid Foundation. I assure you, Business has been done since we came to this place, more to my Satisfaction than any or every Thing done before, excepting the Declaration of Independence which should have been made immediately after the 19th of April 75. *Our Ministers abroad* are directed to assure *foreign Courts*, that notwithstanding the artful and insidious Representations of the Emissaries of Britain to the Contrary, the Congress and People of the United States are determind to maintain their Independence at all Events.<sup>1</sup> This was done before the Success of our Arms in Jersey, of which you will doubtless have receivd Intelligence before this Letter will reach you. Generals Sullivan and Green commanded the two Divisions. The Enemy had before made Lee a Prisoner; but we have convincd them that great as his Abilities are we can beat them without him. I now think that Britain will make a contemptible Figure in America & Europe, but we must still make our utmost Exertions. Pray let the Levies required by our State be raisd with all possible Expedition. By this Conveyance you will have a Resolution vesting large Powers in General Washington, for a *limited* time.<sup>2</sup> It became in my opinion necessary. The Hint I gave you some time ago I still think very important. Genl Gates arrivd here the day before yesterday. I have conversd with him upon it. He told me he had conceivd it before and wishes the Measure may be tryed. It requires Secrecy and Dispatch.<sup>3</sup> Lt Colo Stuart will set off tomorrow with Directions to proceed as far as Boston to purchase ordnance and other Stores, if they cannot be procured elsewhere. He is General Gates Aid de Camp & is very clever. I wish you would take Notice of him.<sup>4</sup>

But I am now called off. Adieu my Friend.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> See Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris, December 30, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> See John Hancock to Certain States, December 30, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> "The Hint" was Adams' plan to burn the British naval vessels on Lake Champlain. See Samuel Adams to Warren, December 6, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> For further information on Stewart's mission, see Committee of Congress to Walter Stewart, December 31, 1776.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to Benjamin Franklin

Honble. Sir

Baltimore 1 January 1777

Congress relying on your wisdom and integrity, and well knowing the great importance of the case, have appointed you their Commissioner to negotiate a treaty of friendship & commerce with the Court of Spain. The idea of Congress on this subject you will find in the instructions of Congress sent by this opportunity to yourself and the other Commissioners at the Court of France. Your Commission for this special service we have now the honor to inclose you.<sup>1</sup>

We are with great Respect & Esteem, Honble. Sir, Yr. most obedt. & very huml Servts.

Benja Harrison

Jno Witherspoon

Richard Henry Lee

Will Hooper

RC (PU). In a clerical hand, and signed by Harrison, Hooper, Lee, and Witherspoon.

<sup>1</sup> Franklin did not go to Spain, however, because the American commissioners, Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, had already delegated this duty to Lee. When Congress learned of the commissioners' decision, they appointed Lee commissioner to Spain on May 1, 1777. See Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:264, 285-86; and *JCC*, 7:8, 10, 318. For Lee's frustrating experience with the Spanish government, see his reports from Spain in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:280, 292-96; and Buchanan P. Thomson, *Spain: Forgotten Ally of the American Revolution* (North Quincy, Mass.: Christopher Publishing House, 1976), pp. 48-56.

## Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Hawley

My dear Sir

Baltimore 1 Jany 1777

I have just Time to inclose You by the Express now going off, a Copy of the Letter recd from General Washington.<sup>1</sup> The middle States are roused from their late supine State, & are exerting themselves to reinforce the Army; I hope a proper Spirit will be exercised on this Occasion & the Enemy be driven from the Jersies. The General makes no Mention of the Corps that accomplished this affair, but I believe You will find them to be principally our Countrymen; I wish not to see Distinctions made, but think that to raise a laudable Emulation Justice ought always to be

done to enterprizing officers & Men. Great Commendations are given to the officers & Men (by General Gates who is here unwell) Which were sent the last Campaign to Ticonderoga. I wish they may know that their Conduct has done them Honor.

We cannot be too attentive to raise the new Levies & attach Men to the Service by supporting the Credit of the Continental Money, paying, Cloathing, Arming & subsisting them well. Let Us exert Ourselves to these purposes, & in twelve Months with the Blessing of God I doubt not We shall see the Independence of America established on a Foundation that cannot be shaken by the Arms of Tyranny. Pray recommend to the Inhabitants of the Country to supply the Commissary with Vegetables & Vinegar; from Want of these thousands have died in the last Campaign. The adjournment of Congress to this place I confess gave me pain, but the air is so much more exhilarating that Some capital Measures touching our Foreign Affairs have been taken which I think will be very serviceable, & I hope it on the whole will prove serviceable. I congratulate You on this Success of our army & salute You with the Compliments of the Season, being Sir, with much Esteem your very sincerely, E Gerry

P.S. The Tories must be exported; Bonds will not answer the purpose, prisons We have not a sufficiency, & they are not worth hanging. I observe in a very good Act of yours the Word "Colony" is again used. Does it not look like Diffidence in your Right to the Terms of an "Independant State?"

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly a copy of the broadside of Washington's December 27, 1776, letter to President Hancock describing the American victory at Trenton. See William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke, December 31, 1776, note 4.

## John Hancock to Joseph Trumbull

Sir

Jany 1st. 1777

I wrote you a few days ago by Express,<sup>1</sup> & Sent the Letter to the Govr. I Send this thro' the same Channels. I have now only time to beg your particular Attention to the foregoing Resolutions of Congress,<sup>2</sup> & to inform you that General Washington is Vested with ful powers to Conduct every Department.

I wish you happy, and am with Esteem, Sir, Your very huml servt,  
John Hancock Predt

RC (Ct). Addressed: "To Joseph Trumbull Esqr, Com[issar]y Gen[era]l."

<sup>1</sup> See Hancock to Joseph Trumbull, December 27, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock sent Trumbull five resolves pertaining to the commissariat that had been passed by Congress on November 28, December 26 and 28, 1776. *JCC*, 6:988, 1041-42, 1047-48.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore, Jan'y 1<sup>t</sup>. 1777

I am to acknowledge the Receipt of your several Favours to the 27<sup>th</sup> Ult<sup>o</sup>. Your Letter of that Date, containing the very agreeable Intelligence of the Success of the Continental Arms under your Command, was last Night delivered to me by your Aid de Camp Colo. Baylor, together with the Hessian Standard.<sup>1</sup> I entertain the most pleasing Expectation that our Affairs will henceforth assume a better Complexion. Your Account of the Behaviour and Spirit of the Troops gave the highest Satisfaction to Congress; and manifests a Disposition which may prove the Forerunner of future Success. Considering the unfavourable Temper of the Men, broken by Fatigue & ill-Fortune, the happy Event of the Expedition appears the more extraordinary. But troops properly inspired, and animated by a just Confidence in their Leader will often exceed Expectation, or the Limits of Probability. As it is entirely to your Wisdom and Conduct the United States are indebted for the late Success of their Arms, the Pleasure you must naturally feel on the Occasion, will be pure and unmixt. May you still proceed in the same Manner to acquire that Glory, which by your disinterested and magnanimous Behaviour you so highly merit.

I enclose to you a Copy of Resolves transmitted to Genl. Schuyler relative to the Northern Department, and also sundry other Resolves relative to your own immediate Department, which are all the Congress have come into since I wrote you last.<sup>2</sup> I have forwarded to all the States Copies of the Resolves vesting you with the Powers, which I had the Pleasure of transmitting in my last, accompanied with Letters explaining the Reasons on which Congress acted in that particular.<sup>3</sup>

From the enclosed Resolve you will perceive Congress have determined that a Horse, properly caparisoned, be presented to your Aid de Camp Colo. Baylor, and to recommend it to you to promote him to be a Colonel of a Regiment of Light Horse. As the Congress have been pleased to entrust me with the Execution of this Resolve, I must beg you will do me the Favour to give Directions to the Quarter Master, or other proper Person, to purchase as handsome a Horse for this Purpose, as can be found. The Reason of my making this Application, is an Information I had received that some Light Horse were taken at Trenton, and are to be publickly sold for the Benefit of the Soldiery. Should this be the Case, I must further ask the Favour of you to give Directions at the same Time to purchase one or two for my own Use. The Money shall be immediately remitted whatever it may be. I should be glad to know what Kind of Horse Furniture you think the most proper, as I would by all Means wish to procure the best, but without your Advice & Assistance, am apprehensive I shall not succeed. If the Horses are to be had, be pleased to



order them to be sent to me and every Expence shall be paid arising thereon.

This Recommendation of Colo. Baylor I doubt not will meet with your approbation, and that on his Return from Virginia, you will give him a Commission with such Pay as you shall think suitable and Adequate.

Wishing you very sincerely the Compliments of the Season, I have the Honour to be, with every Sentiment of Esteem & Regard, Sir, your most obedt. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] I shall Send you the Letter Books by the first safe hand.<sup>4</sup>

By this oppory. I send you four Bundles containg two hundred Commissions, the rest shall immediately follow.<sup>5</sup>

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock. LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's December 27 letter to Hancock describing the battle of Trenton is in PCC, item 152, 3:401-4, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:441-44.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock sent Washington most of the November 28, December 28 and 30 resolves pertaining to Schuyler's command and also forwarded December 31 and January 1 resolves requesting Washington to supply Schuyler with powder and to promote Lt. Col. George Baylor. See *JCC*, 6:988-89, 1047-48, 1051, 1059, 7:7; and Hancock to Schuyler, September 27, 1776, note 4.

<sup>3</sup> See Hancock to the States, December 30, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> In his December 24 letter to Hancock, Washington had asked for the return of the letterbooks he had entrusted to Congress' safekeeping before the battle of Long Island in August 1776. See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 5:426-27, 6:434; and Hancock to Washington, August 17, 1776.

<sup>5</sup> After this sentence in the LB, Hancock wrote: "I also sent by another Express, a copy of the foregoing Letter, with Six Bundles containing three Hundred Commissions."

## William Hooper to Joseph Hewes

My dear Hewes

Baltimore Jany 1, 1777

I was favoured with two letters from you by Capt. Allon. I lament your hard fortune, and unless some measures are immediately taken to prevent the infamous practices of the Privateers, America will soon be in a state of general confusion—one Part warring against another, and the defenceless Southern colonies become a devoted prey to their more formidable Eastern neighbours. I laid your letter relative the Capture of the Brig Joseph before the congress without any embellishment or reserve. The New England Gentlemen, felt the force of the Imputation but considered it as too general. I have an order that our President should write the President and Council of Mass'tts requesting to make an immediate enquiry after the Vessell and the Pirates who have taken her, secure her and them & report immediately to congress. I have also procured a reference of your letter to the marine Committee, who I hope will take some spirited



resolves to avenge the Injury done you and to prevent the repetition of such unjustifiable depredations. Morris is not here, but I have requested him in a letter which I wrote him yesterday enclosing yours to correspond with me upon the subject and exert his utmost endeavours to interest Congress in favour of your Application, by a publick epistle to our Honours. This is all which can be done at present, when I hear more particularly from you I shall prosecute every expedient to improve such information to your benefit.<sup>1</sup>

The Congress upon Part of G. Howe's Army advancing within 9 Miles of Cooper's ferry, by the advices of Mifflin and Putnam removed to this dirty infamous extravagant hole, where with all possible æconomy we live at the rate of 50/ per day, Every necessary of life being double what they cost us in Philadelphia, & before we left that every thing was enormous.

In a letter which accompanies this I send you an account of the signal success obtained at Trenton. It has already had a fine effect upon our recruiting service, one Reg't whose term of Enlistment was expired having reenlisted to a man since that Event. It has operated the contrary effects on our Enemy—as from what we can learn they are Pannic Struck. Certain it is that 2000 which were at Bordentown moved towards Princeton with great Precipitation and carried off all their Stores with them.

The State of General Washingtons Army is pretty nearly as follows.

Of Lees detachments brought from the East Side of Hudsons	
River about-----	2300 effective men
Other continental Regiments-----	2700
Genl Cadwallader with 1200 Militia-----	1200
Genl Ewen perhaps as many-----	1200
Militia come in & coming in very fast since the	
battle will make perhaps-----	2600
	<hr/> 10000

With these Genl Washington will I imagine again enter the Jersies and attempt to drive the Enemy back to New York. Should he succeed Your cause is safe, and my apprehensions about Philadelphia at an end. Howe has about 12,000 in the Jersies, Headquarters at Brunswick & the principal part of the army collected there, most of the outposts are called in, they have a small force at Princeton. Genl Washington is at Newton in Bucks County, where a plot was formed against him and his family, happily defeated by an early discovery of the Tories Intentions.

Lee's Capture surprizes us all. He was taken about 2 miles from his army where he had stopped to write answers to dispatches. A man in the neighbourhood immediately rode off to Brunswick 25 Miles distant, gave information, 80 or 90 light horse were immediately dispatched under the command of Col Harcourt who arrived about 10 oClock in the morning and surprised Lee and his Aid de Camps, 6 in number, at the writing table. A guard of 10 men which men unfortunately at a little distance from the house were cut off from communication with the Genl. Lee was

seized & denied the privilege of taking his Hat or Shoes. One of his Aid de Camp's was wounded in a small conflict they maintained in defence of their General. He was taken to Princeton—thence to Brunswick & then I hear very indifferently used, they intend I hear to send him to England. Stockden I hear is taken by the Enemy 8 Miles from his own home, carried to Brunswick & there confined to close jail.<sup>2</sup> Andrew, Will & John Allen are gone over to the Enemy. Dickinson a little questionable, but I will not believe him guilty till I have much better evidence of his Guilt than at present. There are several frigates cruising on Delaware. Several intended for the Southward. So much for news.

I think myself rather hardly used that notwithstanding my many letters to Convention I have not a single line from them. Am or am I not a delegate? Penn writes me that he has obtained Assurances of being sent here, but expresses himself doubtfully of You and me; that he has interested himself in your and *my* favor. As to the latter he might have spared himself the Trouble. If the Services I have rendered Carolina in a publick Character will not secure me the unsolicited unanimous reappointment of my Country I want it not, I court not further fatigue, I am worn out with the duties of the Office & nothing under Heaven but a wish to promote the Cause of liberty should have kept me from my family and my own private Concerns till this.<sup>3</sup>

Adieu My dear friend. Remember me affectionately to our friends at Edenton. Shew this to Iredell & Jones & any body else who will excuse the precipitation with which I have scrawled it & consider that I have thrown this crude Intelligence on paper, in the midst of a publick Assembly & ten thousand things to divert my attention. Yours truly, W H

[P.S.] Besides the force aforementioned, Genl. Heath has retaken Fort Lee, & Hackinsack Town, with some stores & a few prisoners. Heath has about 2000 with him.

RC (NjHi).

<sup>1</sup> On November 10, 1776, the *Joseph*, a brigantine owned by Hewes and his business partner, Robert Smith, was seized illegally while enroute from Cadiz to Edenton, N.C., by the *Eagle*, a Massachusetts privateer commanded by Brazilla Smith and owned by Elijah Freeman Paine. Ironically this was the second ship belonging to Hewes that had been captured illegally by the *Eagle*, the first having been the *Fanny*, which was taken in September 1776 and later released. To complicate matters further, the *Joseph* was then captured by H.M.S. *Merlin* on November 26. There is no mention in the journals around this time of an order for Hancock to write to the Massachusetts authorities about the *Joseph*, and no letter to this effect has been found before the one he wrote to the Massachusetts Assembly on July 10, 1777. Congress did refer the issue to a special committee on February 4, which recommended four months later that the government of Massachusetts investigate the capture of the *Joseph* and order restitution to be made if no good excuse for its seizure could be found. See *JCC*, 7:86, 8:415–16; Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:293, 580–83, 1216–17; and Joseph Hewes to William Tokeley, May 18, 1776, note. See also Robert Morris to Nathaniel Shaw, January 23, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> In regard to New Jersey delegate Richard Stockton's behavior after his capture by the British, see John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon, March 17, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> On April 28 Hooper was again elected as a delegate to Congress by the North Carolina Assembly, but he resigned this office on May 1 and was replaced by Cornelius Harnett. See *N.C. State Records*, 12:45, 59, 65.

## Richard Henry Lee to William Shippen, Jr.

My dear Sir,

Baltimore 1st January 1776 [*i.e.* 1777]

A happy new year is my wish for you and your family. That it will be a year of freedom our brave troops appear determined on, and whilst they are so, the Instruments of tyranny, and the perpetrators of Devilish deeds will not, cannot face them. The removal from Philadelphia was not a measure of mine, but had my hearty disapprobation so long as disapproving availed any thing; but when go they would, I endeavored to put the best face on it. The Congress have lately invested General Washington with complete powers to displace, place, and direct every thing relative to the military Hospitals. To him therefore, let me advise you to make your immediate application, lay your plan before him, and prove as you have done to me the propriety of adopting it. No doubt can remain but that it will meet with his approbation and support. As for Morgan, the very Air teems with complaints against him. If all charged against him be true, I would not have my conscience so burthened for Mountains of Gold.<sup>1</sup> Reasons for expecting the strongest friendship from France & Spain multiply upon us every day. If they can be prevailed with to make war, farewell the glory of England, and it may then be said as formerly it was of Rome Sevir Armis Luxuria incubuit, victumque ulciscitur orbem.<sup>2</sup> Had it not been for the vile appendages of Luxury, we should not have been abused, nor Britain overwhelmed by France. It will give us great pleasure to hear from you often, but greater still to see you. I will endeavor, but I know not how to hear from my Cousin Thom. But he is in a peaceful Country, and I make no doubt he is happy. Our best love attends. Farewell,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC). Addressed: "Doctor William Shippen Junr. at Bethelam in Pennsylvania. Favored by Colonel Stewart."

<sup>1</sup> Shippen had outlined his plan for hospitals in a December 20, 1776, letter to Lee; and in an undated letter which was probably written around this time, Shippen had suggested candidates for positions as directors and assistants of three hospital districts and listed charges against John Morgan. "The abuses, the Neglect & fraud in M——ns department have been of more disservice to the New Army, than any other circumstance I know of—(not paying the men is another bad thing, very few have received any pay for 4 months). The New England men say they will not serve if M——n is Director. The following are facts that can be proven but I should not choose to be called on

"1. He appointed his own apprentice who had not been with him 3 months, Apothecary General at 50 Dollars a Month, pocketed the whole & charged the youth for his board.

"2. He had 8 or 10 mates at 3/9 a day & charges the continent 7/6—they are quite ignorant.

"3. From 50 to 100 sick are entirely trusted to these boys.

"4. There always have been a great abundance of Stores locked up & with great expence removed from place to place greater than the first cost, & the sick perish for want of them. Hundreds in Hackinsack lying in straw in cold barns with nothing but Beef & bread to eat.

"5. He makes money of the Tallow, by making candles & selling them to the hospital, therefore nothing but Beef given them, this I have from his Q Master Who was to have part of the profit. & I am told he pockets all the retained rations—but this I cant prove. Nor should I choose to be called upon to prove any thing. I have my information from the united voice of his own officers." Lee Papers, PPAmP.

Although Morgan was dismissed as director general on January 9 and Shippen's plan for hospitals was transmitted to Congress by General Washington in February, it was not until April that Congress adopted new regulations for military hospitals based largely on Shippen's recommendations and appointed Shippen as director general. *JCC*, 7: 24, 161–64, 231–37, 244–46, 253.

For a discussion of the assistance Shippen received in the preparation of his plan from Dr. John Cochran, who subsequently became physician and surgeon general of the army in the Middle Department, see Morris H. Saffron, *Surgeon to Washington. Dr. John Cochran, 1730–1807* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977), pp. 28–39, 213–17.

<sup>2</sup> This is a quotation from Juvenal *Satires* 6. 292–93, which may be translated: "A heavier burden than the arms of war, Luxury lies like an incubus upon us, avenging the world that Rome has conquered."

## Marine Committee to John Baldwin

Sir <sup>1</sup>

January 1st. 1777

Mr. Patterson is now going down to Egg Harbour to take the care and management of your Prizes in that place, and as its probable you may return there from your present Cruise, you are hereby directed on receipt of this Letter to send up immediately a return of the Provisions and Stores that will be wanted to compleat the Wasp for a three months voyage. Send also a List of your men and an account of what Slops and clothing may be necessary if you should be ordered to proceed to Europe. You may heave down the schooner & get her in good order against the return of the Express by whom you make these returns and if you are ordered on the service mentioned all things necessary shall be sent you. Keep this to yourself until further orders. Mr. Patterson will supply you with money for such expences as arise on the Vessel at Egg Harbour and if more is wanted write us for it.

I am on behalf of the Marine Comee., Your hble Servant,

R Morris V. P.



LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Lieutenant Baldwin was commander of the Continental schooner *Wasp*.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Jany 1st. 1777

I was honoured with your favour of yesterday by Mr Howell late last night, & ever solicitous to comply with your requisitions I am up very early this morning to dispatch a supply of fifty thousand Dollars to your Excellency.<sup>1</sup> You will receive that Sum with this letter but it will not be got away so early as I cou'd wish for, none concerned in this movement except myself are up. I shall rouse them immediately. It gives me great Pleasure that you have engaged the Troops to continue, and if further occasional supplys of money are necessary you may depend on my exertions either in a publick or private capacity.

The Year 1776 is over. I am heartily glad of it & hope you nor America will ever be plagued with such another. Let us accept the Success at Trentown as a presage of future fortunate Events and under that impression I do most sincerely wish you a Successful Campaign in 1777 to crown you with immortal honours in reward of the dangers & Fatigues of War, and that You may for many, many years after, enjoy the Sweets of Peace & Domestick happiness in reward of your Social Virtues. With Sincere Esteem & regard I ever am, sir, Your Obedt Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's December 31 letter to Morris is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:457-58.

## Matthew Thornton to Meshech Weare

Hond Sir,

Baltimore Jany 1D 1777

The weakness of my Eyes Since the Small Pox, is the Reason I have not done my Self the Honor to write to you & the Honble. Council & House, Oftener & More at large.

At present the Bearer waits & I have only time to Say General Washington has Gain'd two very Considerable Victories over the enemies of America & the Congress expects every moment the news of a Grand engagement.

For further news I must Refer you to news papers. If you are lead to beleive Mistaks by them (or neither know not what to beleive) the Current reports here are as uncertain.



I have not been favoured with one letter Publick.or privat Since I left my own House. I would take it as a great Honor, to Receive a letter from you, or any worthy friend.<sup>1</sup> My Worthy College Col. Whipple is well.

Pray Sir take the trouble to present my Compliments to the Honble Council & House & Except the Same from Your Most Obedient, & Sir,  
your Hble sert. Matthew Thornton

RC (MeHi).

<sup>1</sup> Meshech Weare's December 16, 1776, letter to the New Hampshire delegates did not arrive in Baltimore until January 19, 1777. See William Whipple to Weare, February 3, 1777.

## Oliver Wolcott to Andrew Adams?

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Baltimore, 1 Jany. 1777

Your Favour of the 30 Novr came to hand last Evening for which I most sincerely thank you. I wrote to you the 15 Nov. which I hope you have recd.<sup>2</sup> Your observations of the Necessity of establishing a respectable Army are in my Judgment Very Proper. Congress have empowered Genl Washington to raise 16 Battalions in addition to those already granted and 3,000 Cavalry. Also have given the Genl a Power for six months to conduct at his Descretion the operations of the War, establish magazines, call upon the Militia when necessary, regulate every Department in the Army, Displace and appoint any officer below the Rank of Brigadr. Genl. &c. In a Word the Whole of the Military Department is put into his Hand for six Months. Upon this that the Preservation of the Civil Liberties of the People, at the present Time, depends upon the full Exertion of the Military Power. An Embargo for six months is laid upon salted Provisions.<sup>3</sup> For other matters of publick Intelligence referr you to the enclosed I hope We may obtain further advantages agt the Enemy in the Jersys. The Congress is this moment going off. I have only to say that We must have an Army, to carry on a War without one is a New Peice of Business. That they ought to be provided for in the best manner, and that without discipline they will not be serviceable and that if We can once bring one into the Feild, they will be much better provided for, disciplined and governed than they have hitherto been. In a Word I believe if We can get an Army it will be a good one—more happy themselves and more Beneficial to the Publick than any we have yet had.

Great Complaints are made that the Assemblys have appointed great Numbers of Very insufficient officers and have neglected the most apparent Merit.

Your kindness for me particularly exacts my Gratitude. I wish I was less sensible of the Injury I have recd. Any but those who have exercised Power to answer sinister Purposes to my Injury I can easily forgive, but

these men I hope may deserve not only my Forgiveness but that of their Maker. I am at no Loss as to what they deserve. But God forbid that the Villany shall ever induce me to relax my Endeavours to serve my Country as farr as I am able. I saw the Baseness of these Mens Design and the Effect of my own undertaking in a good Degree contrary to my own Opinion I undertook, and therefore ought to suffer. I am generally tho't to be pritty inflexible in my own Opinion. I certainly will study to be more so.

My Compliments to Mrs. Adams and with Candor Accept this hasty Sketch from Sir, your most Obedient, humble Servant

Oliver Wolcott

RC (N).

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Adams of Litchfield, Conn., with whom Wolcott maintained a steady correspondence, was the probable recipient. The subjects discussed here are similar to those discussed in other letters to Adams; and the contemporary endorsements on this and three other of Wolcott's letters to him—"Coll. Wolcott's Letter," on this and one of March 22, 1776, and "Genl. Wolcotts Letter," on letters of March 22 and April 9, 1777—appear to be in the same hand.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See the resolve of December 30, 1776. *JCC*, 6:1054.

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear

Baltimore 1 Janry 1777

I Wrote to you the 25t and 13t last, Since which Nothing material has Occurred, except the Battle at and near Trenton, in which the American Army took 918 Prisoners, killed 20 or 30, took 4 Colors, 6 Brass Feild Pieces &c, the particular acco. of which you will have. I hope We may flatter ourselves that further Advantage will be soon obtained in that Quarter. I have not yet heard what the Troops which went to R Island are about but I hope there Designs will be frustrated. Nothing of consequence from the Southward.

How long the Congress will continue here will depend on Contingences. For myself I wish it might not be long for it is infinitely the most dirty Place I was ever in. No One can Walk about here but in Boots. The Air and Paths are in the same Condition that they are with us the latter End of March and beginning of April. This Weather I Suppose will continue near Two Months. The Place is said to be healthy but I am sure it is extremely uncomfortable.

By the Blessing of God I am well Otherwise than my having a Cold which I hope will pass off before long.

My best Regards to my Family and Freinds whom I hope God will Protect and Bless. Take Care of your Health, make the Cares of Life Easy. Prosperous and happy Times I trust will Return to our Country, and that God will grant us the Peace and Happiness of former Days, A

Happiness which I most sincerely Covet, tho I trust I shall never wish for Peace, with the Loss of the Security of my Country—for what is there which We can leave our Children equal to the advantages of civil and religious Liberty.

I have been in Some Measure Acquainted with the Treatment which I have personally recd. from a Number of my Countrymen. I can easily forgive every one but those who in a diabolical insidious Manner brot Me into a Situation which it was impossible for Me to extricate myself from but with the utmost Difficulty. No kind of Conduct however reasonable, proper and necessary but what would expose me to the most Villanous Imputation, and of that kind which a Mind capable of the least Degree of Sensibility must be the most deeply affected with. But I will try to forgive them, tho' God knows that it is hard Work to do it.

My Regard to Mr Lyman and you will excuse me to him for my not Writing to him oftner. I have but little spare time as I am Obliged to attend upon Business Very Steadily, as no Deligates have yet come from Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> Wishing you a happy new year and that God would safely Conduct you and me thro the Events of the present year, I subscribe myself yours with the most sincere and inviolable Affection,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wolcott was still suffering from a bad cold on the 5th when he explained in another letter to Laura: "as Mr. Sherman got here on Fryday, I shall not be under that indispensable Obligation to Attend upon Business, when my Health would not well admit of it, as I have hitherto for some considerable Time been." Wolcott Papers, CtHi.

## Samuel Adams to Arthur Lee

My dear Sir

Baltimore Jan 2 1777

It has been altogether from a Regard to your Safety that I have re-strained myself from continuing on my part that Correspondence which you were obliging enough to indulge for several years. I know very well that your Avowal of and warm Attachmt to the Cause of Justice and truth, had renderd you exceedingly obnoxious to the Malice of the British King & his Ministers, and that a Letter written by a zealous Asserter of that Cause, and addressed to you, while you was in their Power would, if intercepted, have brought upon you the Resentment of that cruel & vindictive Court. But I cannot omit this opportunity of writing to you after so long a Silence, to assure you that I am still most heartily engagd according to my small Ability in supporting the Rights of America and of Mankind. In my last Letter to you near two years ago,<sup>1</sup> I ventured to give you my opinion, that if the British Troops then in Boston should attempt

to march out in an hostile Manner, it would most surely effect a total and perpetual Separation of the two Countrys. This they did in a very short time, and the great Event has since taken place, sooner indeed than I expected it would, though in my opinion, not so soon as in Justice it might, & in sound Policy it ought. But there is a Timidity in our Nature which prevents our taking a decisive Part in the critical time and very few have fortitude enough to tell a Tyrant they are determind to be free. Our Delay has been dangerous to us; yet it has been attended with one Advantage. It has afforded to the World a strong Proof that oppressed & Insulted as we were, we were willing to give Britain time to recollect herself, and correct her own Errors. We are now enduring in the sharp conflict, confiding that righteous Heaven will not look with an indifferent Eye upon a Cause so manifestly just, and so interesting to Mankind. You are now called to act in a still more enlarged Sphere. Go on my Friend in the support of Liberty Virtue. You already have the Applause of virtuous Men, and may be assured of the Smiles of Heaven. Your Brother Mr. R H Lee will give you a particular Account of our Affairs in America. Nothing therefore remains for me to add but that I am, Your very affectionate friend,

SA

FC (NN)

<sup>1</sup> See Adams to Arthur Lee, March 4, 1775.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to Larkin Hammond

Sir

Baltimore 2 January 1777

You are to proceed with all the dispatch in your power with the Schooner Jenifer under your command to Nantes in France; on your arrival there, you are to apply to Mr. Thomas Morris if he should be at that port, if he should not, your application must be to Messrs Pliarne, Penet & Co. who will furnish you with the necessary cash for your journey to Paris, for which place you must set out immediately and deliver your dispatches to Messrs. Deane, Franklin, & Lee, and wait their orders; when they discharge you, you are to return with the utmost diligence to America, & put into the most convenient port to the Southward of the Delaware.<sup>1</sup> We think Chincoteague, or some other on the back of the Eastern Shore, the most likely for avoiding men of War and would therefore have you attempt getting into one of those ports; when arrived you must leave the schooner under the command of your mate, and bring the dispatches yourself to Congress, wherever it may be Sitting.

You are before you set out for Paris, to consult with Mr. Morris, or the above Gentlemen, whether your vessel will not be most likely to escape



the enemy by sending her to some other port to meet you on your return; if this should be their opinion, you are to give orders to your mate accordingly. You are also to deliver your pig iron to the order of those Gentlemen, and take from them such a quantity of military stores as will ballast your vessel. The Safe delivery of the dispatches, with which you are entrusted, & the obtaining answers to them, are matters of such immense consequence to the continent that We cannot too strongly recommend to you the avoiding all vessels, that you may see, either outward bound or on your return. You are also to avoid as much as possible, falling in with the Headlands & Islands, as it is most usual for Men of War to cruize off such places.

The Dispatches will be delivered to you in a Box, which you must put into a bag with two shots, that in case of falling in with an enemy, from which you cannot escape, you may be prepared to sink them which on Such an event's happening, we earnestly insist on your doing. We wish you a good voyage and safe return and are, Yr. Most Humble Servts,

B. Harrison

R.H. Lee

P.S. When you arrive at Nantes, enquire and get directions from the Gentlemen there to whom you are recommended, for cash to carry you to Paris, where Dr. Franklin, Mr. Deane, and Mr. Arthur Lee lodge in Paris, and above all things take care not to let it be known at Nantes from whence you came, your business, or where you are going except to the above Gentlemen.

FC (DNA: PCC, item 79).

<sup>1</sup> Larkin Hammond, a captain in the Maryland navy, sailed from Baltimore in the *Jenifer* on January 9 and delivered his dispatches to Silas Deane on March 14, 1777. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:189, 633n; and *NYHS Collections* 20 (1887): 23.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir Philada. Jany 2d. 1777

The enclosed dispatches from the General<sup>1</sup> & from Mr. Palfrey are just come to hand, we have sent the latters express back and informed him of our having remitted Fifty thousand Dollars to Genl. Washington yesterday for the purpose of paying the Bounty of Ten Dollars to the Troops that reinlist for Six Weeks, at the same time we told him the letters shou'd be sent forward directly and we did not doubt of the necessary supply of money being sent him soon as possible. You will please to observe our Fund is almost exhausted. Mr. Commissary Wharton called on us this Morning for Sixty thousand Dollars; we granted him forty



thousand with a promise of more when that is expended. Mr. Wharton has now drawn from us 80,000 Dollars, 50,000 we lent the Council of Safety (which they are to repay when your supply to them comes up), 50,000 are Sent to Genl. Washington, so that only 20000 remains out of which we have made some payments; however we shall draw on the Loan office as occasion may require & we think it might be adviseable to lodge a further Fund of 200,000 Dollars with Mr Mease to be ready for any exigencys that may happen. As the Generals letter gives you the State of his army we need not add on that Subject except to assure you that he will gather daily Strength in militia. Sincerely do we wish that this may be the last time that American Militia will be called forth to the Field, for it is a measure thought the most destructive that could be devised.

The Enemies Ships still remain in our Bay & we fear they will do immense damage by intercepting numerous necessary supplies. Capt Hammond has discharged 47 Prisoners in consequence of Mr Morris's letter to him,<sup>2</sup> part of them are come up & Mr Bevan with the rest are on the Road, when he arrives we shall know the terms on which they have been dismissed. The Randolph, Hornet & Several other Vessells still remain at the Piers waiting some favourable opening to push out. Lt Colo Johnson & Major Frazer of Waynes Pennsylvania Battalion called on us this morning, they say the men in that corps are as good Soldiers as any in America, but will not reinlist on any other Condition than being permitted to return home. Those terms being granted them and complied with they have no doubt of getting every Man & they, the officers, wou'd prefer them to fresh hands. We told them Congress had this matter before them upon the representation of Genl Schuyler &c, but they pressed us exceedingly to mention the matter to Congress & Urged in favour of the Pennsylvania & Jersey Troops being sent down soon as possible, as the Garrison can easily be maintained by the Eastern Militia untill the New Regiments are formed & ordered up again. We are in search of a person that understands Casting Brass Canon. Mr Byers is in New Jersey but has not been heard of for some time. We shall write to him & continue our Search for others.

With great respect we remain, sir, Your Obedient servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 1 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:429-31, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:460-63.

<sup>2</sup> Not found, but for Capt. Andrew Snape Hamond's December 30 reply, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:629.

## Executive Committee to William Palfrey

Sir

January 2nd 1777

Your letter to Congress of yesterday is now in our Office, and which we shall dispatch to Baltimore by Express. As we concur with you that the engagements with the Soldiry Should at all times be complied with, we Shall recommend it to Congress to Send you a Sufficient Supply of Money.

In consequence of a request from his Excellency the General, We yesterday sent him Fifty Thousand Dollars for the purpose of Paying the 10 Dollars bounty you mentioned so that we hope the Army will suffer nothing untill you get a Supply.

We are Sir, Yr. mst Obt Serts.

[P.S.] We send you Six Sticks of Sealing Wax.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

## Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull

Dear Sir

Baltimore 2d Jany 1777

Your Favour of the 23d Decr is just come to Hand & inclosed are the Orders of Congress for emporting Flower & Rice. I should have wrote by your young Gentleman, but he stopped at Philadelphia. Capt Doughty will go off the 4th or 5th with 400000 Dollars, & the Loan Office Certificates will either be sent by Express or under his Care to each of the New England Commissioners, who will also receive the necessary Directions. I will move in the Morning for a Warrant on the Loan offices of Connecticut & Massachusetts for 300000 Dollars, in your Favour, which answers all that is mentioned in your Letter relative to Business.<sup>1</sup>

I am informed that in the New York Paper is the Copy of a Letter from the C. G. to a Memr of Congress wherein Colo Reed is censured; I have not seen it, or heard to whom it is directed—but shall not be surprized if to myself.<sup>2</sup>

I congratulate You on the Success of our Arms at Trentown; Our Men embrace every favourable oppertunity to give Tests of their Courage, & should be ever indulged in their martial Inclinations. The Regiments in the Detachment that attacked the Enemy were Reeds, Poor's, Starks, N.H.; Glover's, Sergeant's, Hutchinson's, Patterson's & Graton's, M.B.; Durky's, Ct.; Varnum's, R.I.; Stone's, Maryd.; & Reads, Weadons, Lauson's, Scot's & Buckner's, Virga., making in the whole 2500. The public should be apprized hereof, that by doing Justice to the brave, they may Excite them to nobler Acts & raise a laudable Emulation, free from Envy & Boasting, thro out America.

The Lexington a Continental Frigate of 14 Guns arrived here this Morning from Cape Francois after having about ten days since been captured by a thirty two Gun Frigate. The officers were all taken out & about twelve or fifteen Men put on board her by them but the Wind being high they lost one of their Boats & were unable to add to this Number, in Consequence of wch. the Crew of the Lexington retook the vessel & arrived here with the following Cargo: 1400 Ells Cloaths & Coatg., 500 Ells Flannel & 300 of Oznab., 1 bbl. Salt petre, 200 thousand needles, 636 thousand pins, 366 reams paper, 386 Blankets, 12 3/4 Tons Sulphur, 5000 Flints, 500 stand arms with Bayonets, 7 1/2 Tons Lead & 8 Tons powder.<sup>3</sup>

I remain sir with much Esteem your Friend & humble serv,  
E Gerry

Jany 3d. The Order proposed in the first part of this Letter having passed Congress is now enclosed. I think it will be necessary to inform yourself from the Loan Office Commissioners who of them is or may be best supplied with Money & inform the Treasurer that he may send an order accordingly.

In the Evening. I am just come from a Visit to our good Friend General Gates who is on the Recovery, which will doubtless give You pleasure. I suspect that a mercenary party at Albany have endeavoured to gravel you in supplying the Army, & find that at certain Times when there should have been two Months (or six Weeks at least) provisions in the Garrison, there has been only a Supply for the same Number of Days. This is a Matter of serious Concern, as the Enemy by investing the Garrison at such a Time, would oblige it to give them Battle upon their own Terms or retreat by the way of the new Road to the N E States. Pray inform me whether You can establish a Magazine of provisions at Bennington for an Army of 10000 Men three Months & keep up the usual Supplys notwithstanding opposition & without the assistance of the Albany Gentlemen; & if not, whether it would be a good plan to direct a certain Quantity to be provided in or near Albany by the York Convention or General Schuyler to supply the Militia that may occasionally come in, or answer any other Demands that may be found necessary during the next Campaign? & also what Quality of provisions & Quantity should be thus ordered? I think your powers & connections may render this needless, but as it can be done without interfering in your Department, if You think there is the least Chance of it's being necessary & advise thereto [it] shall be adopted. The Bearer brings the Certificates to the Commissioner of the loan offices in N England.

RC (Ct).

<sup>3</sup> For the results of Gerry's action, see the January 3 postscript of this letter and *JCC*, 7:12.

<sup>2</sup> Commissary General Joseph Trumbull's letter of November 18, 1776, to William Williams was captured and printed in the *New York Gazette; and the Weekly Mercury*, December 9, 1776. It is also in *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3: 1497-98.

<sup>3</sup> For further information on the capture and recapture of the Continental brig *Lexington*, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7: 534, 836.

## John Hancock to Ebenezer Hancock

Dear Brother

Baltim[or]e. 2 Jany. 1777

This will be handed you by Coll. Stewart a Friend of Mine, & a Gentleman of an Amiable Character, & Spirited officer.<sup>1</sup> I Desire your particular Attention to him, & the exercise of every Civility in your power, & that you will Accommodate him with a Bed in your house during his Stay in Boston, & in short I beg you do every thing in your power to Render Col Stewart's Abode in Boston as agreeable as possible. I have wrote Mr Bant.<sup>2</sup> Introduce Col Stewart to all my Friends.

I wish you happy & am, Your's affectionately, John Hancock

RC (PHC). Addressed: "To Ebenezer Hancock Esqr, D[eputy] Paymaster General, at Boston."

<sup>1</sup> See Committee of Congress to Walter Stewart, December 31, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

Sir, Baltimore Jany. 2d. 1777.

I am to acknowledge the Receipt of your several Favours to the 20th. ulto. all which were immediately laid before Congress.

The enclosed Resolves will inform you of the Measures Congress have taken relative to the Northern Army, a Copy of which I have forwarded to Genl. Schuyler.<sup>1</sup> I transmit to you a Copy of the Circular Letter which Congress ordered to be sent to all the States, in Consequence of their vesting the Commander in Chief with the large and extensive powers I enclosed to you in my last.<sup>2</sup>

I am this Minute informed by Captain Boyce of the Marines, who was on Board the *Lexington*, that she was taken by the *Pearle* Frigate off the Capes of Delaware. The Weather proving extremely bad, only seven Hands were put on Board. In Consequence of which the *Lexington's* Crew rose; and having taken Possession of her, have brought safe into this Harbour. She is loaded with Powder, Arms, & dry Goods. I shall order her to be immediately unloaded, & dispatch her as fast as possible.

I must ask the Favour of you to send me by the next Express, Half a Ream of good Writing Paper, two Pounds of the best Sealing Wax, a Box



of Wafers, and three Hundred of the best Quills. Excuse the Trouble I give you, and believe me with great Regard, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

[P.S.] I always Inclose the whole Resolves to Genl. Washington, & you shall always have Copies.

Please to order the Letter to the Council of Safety to be deliver'd.<sup>3</sup>

The several Packetts, seven in Number for General Washington, I pray you will Send by Express to him, and the Letter for New Jersey, if any Executive power there, please to forward it, tho' on Second thought I will inclose that to the General.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See Hancock to Washington, January 1, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Hancock to the States, December 30, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> Hancock's last letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety that has been found was written on December 27, 1776.

## Richard Henry Lee to John Page

Dear Sir,

Baltimore, 2d January, 1776 [*i.e.* 1777]

By the express lately sent from hence, I enclosed you both the printed accounts that we have had of the General's success against the enemy in New Jersey. Colonel Baylor, who brought us the General's letter, says that a party of Hessians more was brought in just as he came away, which makes the number of prisoners between one thousand and eleven hundred. Re-enforcements are daily going up, and in such numbers that the General intends to push the enemy, and we hope successfully, out of the Jerseys. The Hessian officers in general behaved infamously in this battle; and the British light-horse, with the Tories that were in town, scampered off at the beginning of the engagement. A few days before this attack, a flag was sent over to Trenton to this Colonel Rohl, now a prisoner: he received and treated the officer kindly; asked him if 'twas not reported that the Hessians plundered much, and that they were the only plunderers. The officer answering in the affirmative, Colonel Rohl replied that the English had address enough to have it so believed, but that it was notorious that the British officers and soldiers plundered more than the Hessians. Two British officers present denied it not. Soon after this rout, two thousand Hessians that were at Bordentown, below Trenton, on Delaware, marched off, having previously sent away one hundred wagons loaded with plunder, directly towards New York. If the Hessians are the smallest plunderers, what are the British? In truth, we hear that the people are enraged to a great degree at the brutal treatment they have met with. Our worthy friend, General Lee, had retired to a house but a



little way from his army (and by the advice of a man who lived in the parts, and who affected great resentment at the enemies' conduct) to write a few letters to General Gates and others on business of consequence; when the villian who had brought him there, went privately express to the enemy and brought up the light-horse, seventy of them, who made the General prisoner, carrying him off without his hat. They had travelled very fast, their horses being in a foam when they arrived at the house. This is certainly a heavy loss to the American cause, but still it rests on ground too strong to be shaken. You say it is reported that my letters have given up all for lost. You may rely upon it, sir, that this is false. I have related things truly as they were, and whilst Pennsylvania was in lethargy, supposed, as our General was without an army, that Philadelphia might fall; but always subjoined that, though this might hurt, yet the loss of ten such cities would not ruin, the American cause, and called upon my correspondents to remember that at the beginning of this quarrel we told our enemies that we knew they could take our cities and our sea-coast, but that still enough would be left to secure American freedom. These have been my sentiments, and therefore you see how grossly I have been misrepresented.<sup>1</sup> But the treatment I have received this way from some mean-spirited, dirty, envious wretches, has been frequent and gross. My contempt for those folks is abundantly greater than I can express. I am perfectly satisfied that these little malicious lies will make no impression on you or any sensible, virtuous man, and the rest may think of me as they please. I love their ill opinion, but should be miserable under their esteem. The king of Spain has certainly given us free use of his ports for our ships of all kinds, including prizes. And every wicked art, even lies of the British Ambassador at the Court of France, cannot prevent them from assisting us.

Farewell, dear sir; encourage the enlisting business, because with our new army American freedom and independence will be secure.

Richard Henry Lee.

MS not found; reprinted from *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 16 (March 1878): 109–10.

<sup>1</sup> In his December 20, 1776, letter to Lee, Page had complained that "Tories propagate what Lies they please to invent & it is often long before we can contradict them; seldom before they have made a bad Impression some where. Many People here were greatly alarmed at the Letters which it is said you & Col. Harrison wrote by the Post (I have not yet seen them) & seem to think all is lost." Lee Family Papers, ViU. Another example of the charges being circulated in Virginia had been reported by Richard Henry's brother Thomas Ludwell Lee. In his December 6, 1776, letter Thomas had related a story in which Carter Braxton alleged that Richard Henry and Francis Lightfoot Lee had sided with the New England delegates in refusing to punish an eastern privateer for taking an American vessel loaded with goods on the Continental account. Ibid. For references to other accusations made against Lee, see Richard Henry Lee to Thomas Jefferson, November 3, 1776, note 4.

## Thomas Nelson to Thomas Jefferson

Dear Jefferson

Baltimore Jany 2d 1777

Colo. Zane delivered your Letters to me in this Town, and as I had it not in my power to execute what you desir'd, I gave them to him and desir'd he would negotiate the Bill and transact the other business, which he promis'd to do.

Our affairs have had a black appearance for the two last months, but they say the Devil is not so black as he is painted. We have at last turn'd the Tables upon those Scoundrels by surprize, as you will see by the enclosed paper. It was very unfortunate for us, that Ewing and Cadwalader could not get over the River, for it is almost certain, that they would have surprized a large Detachment of Hessians at Mount Holly, and most probably they would have taken the greatest part of them. The Number of prisoners exceeds what the General makes them by 500. He is always very moderate. Could we but get a good Regular Army we should soon clear the Continent of these damn'd Invaders. They play the very Devil with the Girls and even old Women to satisfy their libidinus appetities. There is Scarcely a Virgin to be found in the part of the Country that they have pass'd thro' and yet the Jersies will not turn out. Rapes, Rapine, and Murder are not sufficient to rouse the resentment of these People. If they be not sufficient provocations I despair of any thing working them up to opposition. Your friends John, Andrew and William Allen are with General Howe; and Dickeson is they know not where, but it is imagined that he is on board the Roebuck. This Gentleman, after giving his Vote repeatedly in Congress, for the emission of Continental Money, wrote to his Brother not to receive any of it in payment for his Debts, and his Letter was intercepted by the Council of Safety.<sup>1</sup> What does he deserve?

The Allens have humm'd themselves finely, for when they went to Howe, there was very little doubt, but he would shortly have been in possession of Philada., as indeed he might, had he play'd his Cards well; but now I am in hopes that will not take place, and that they will be treated as they deserve. There are some of the vilest Rascals in the City and Neighbourhood of Philadelphia that ever existed.

The General was inform'd a few nights ago, that a conspiracy was form'd by some people in Bucks County near his Camp to kidnap him as poor Lee was, but he has more prudence than to be caught in that manner, however the disposition of the Inhabitants of that County appears to be inimical to our cause, which you knew before. Adieu,

Thos Nelson Jr.

[P.S.] You dont like long Letters more than myself.

Our little friend Hopkinson has suffer'd greatly by these Free booters; They have destroy'd all his furniture, Cabinet of Curiosities and his fine

Harpicord, which I am told was the best that ever came to America. You Have little chance for the Telescope. Old Weatherspoon has not escap'd their fury. They have burnt his Library. It grieves him much that he has lost his controversial Tracts. He would lay aside the Cloth to take revenge of them. I believe he would send them to the Devil if he could, I am sure I would. Thus endeth the postscript.

RC (DLC). Jefferson, *Papers* (Boyd), 2:3-4.

<sup>1</sup> See Benjamin Rush to Richard Henry Lee, December 20, 1776, note 3.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town, Jany 3d 1777

Congress have received no Letters from General Washington since the 29th. We are informed by private Letters, that all our forces, about 10,000, are in the Jerseys, and that the Enemy are retreating. It is certain, that Genl. Heath has retaken Hackensack and some Prisoners.

Mr. Shearman, Delegate from Connecticut, informs that the Enemy are in Possession of New Port, Rhode Island, and that about 10,000 are collected to oppose them.

The enclosed Petition was put into my hands. Your Board will make proper Enquiry and grant Redress. Captain Yates delivered Me the enclosed.

Mr. Carroll informs Me, that an Application was heretofore made to Congress relative to the Case of Milne and Jenkins & declined Giving any opinion. I have given the State of their Case to the Georgia Delegates, I will write You further on this Subject.<sup>1</sup>

General Smallwood will communicate to You his Directions from Congress; I shall procure Money from them as soon as it can be signed, and shall forward the General with a Sum to enable him to expedite the new Levies. I doubt not the ready Concurrence and assistance of your Board. On the Success in procuring a New Army depends our all. I wish You would give a Line to any Officer, who may apply to You for Money & signify what Sum I shall advance.

I think it would be proper for You in a full Board to consider the Propriety of Convening our general Assembly. Our State is as yet unrepresented.

I am, Gent. with Respect and Regard, Your Most Obedt. Servt.

Saml. Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> See William Paca to the Maryland Council of Safety, December 7, 1776, note 2. See also Chase to the Maryland Council, January 19? 1777.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 3d. 1777, 10 oClock A.M.

An Express arrived here this morning with the enclosed letters from Rhode Island, the one from Mr Tillinghast informs the arrival of the Alfred at Boston & of her Prize Ship the Millish at Port Bedford, those to Mr. Ellery may probably give you the State of the Enemies Forces at Rhode Island & the letters directed to Genl. Lee, Mr Morris opened as knowing & in some degree being entrusted with his private affairs, and if they were on Publick business (which proves to be the case) the Contents ought to be known. The Express that brought these letters was dispatched by Governor Cooke, therefore we suppose the letters to Mr. Ellery are of Consequence.<sup>1</sup> As none that we have opened made it necessary to incur the Charges, and as he is jaded as well as his Horse, We have told him to wait the return of your answer to this, when Mr Ellery or your instructions respecting him shall be Complied with.

We are this moment in the utmost state of Anxiety as we have reason to think an engagement was Commenced this morning the decision of which will have the most important Consequences to all America. Capt James Nicholson (of the Frigate Virga.) came down from Trenton about an hour ago & says that Genl Mifflin & Genl Cadwallader joined Genl. Washington yesterday in the forenoon, that he imagines a plan of attacking the Enemy had been Concerted & was to have been executed this day, that Ld Stirling's and Colo Hands Brigades had been sent from Trenton on the Road to Prince Town yester forenoon and that about one oClock they fired the alarm Guns, about three miles from Trenton where they met the Enemy who pressed on them with Superiour Numbers and these two Brigades supported a retreating engagement from that time untill Sunset when they joined our main army which had taken Post & was drawn up on the high grounds on this side Trenton Bridge. The loss of the Two Brigades Capt Nicholson thinks was inconsiderable, he saw but two or three wounded men come in & dont imagine the whole loss can amount to 100 men. He says our Troops must have suffered much from the severe Cold of last night. They have been much harrassed & cou'd not get comfortable sleep whilst the Two armies were so near, the advance Guards not 100 yards from each other. No Certainty of the Enemies numbers but from what he saw, he judges they might be 6 to 7000. This morning he heard them engaged and he is in hopes that the attack was made by our People. He says it was the opinion of some of our General Officers that they shou'd make the attack this morning, and at all events he thinks they will be obliged to beat the Enemy or be cut to pieces, for there is not a Boat or Canoe between Trenton & Burlington and if they attempt a retreat he thinks the Enemy will press on them to their destruc-



tion. Thus sir, We are waiting the Event of this most Important Action and write what we think that we may be prepared to give quick dispatch to the Express after we hear farther. The Council of Safety are dispatching up the Gondolos again & other Craft to be ready for such Service as may offer & it is a happiness that the old Ice is gone & no new made. We hold ourselves in readiness to do whatever Circumstances may require from us & happy indeed shall we be to give you good news at the close of this letter.

It is now 6 oClock in the Evening. We have waited impatiently all day for fresh accounts from Trenton, but no person has come in from thence since Capt Nicholson but Mr. Tod the Coachmaker who is one of the Light Horse of this City. He says he left our Camp at 2 oClock this morning and cannot give us any further Acct than Capt Nicholson has already done. He says also that he heard only 10 Canon fired this morning but there are others who insist they heard a brisk canonade from daylight [to] 10 or 11 oClock, this is said both in Town or Country, in short Sir We are very sorry to send of an Express with these imperfect Accounts, but We fear if we do not this night inform you of what we have heard, you may be alarmed by Travellers with reports that will give the Congress immense pain. Therefore we dispatch this express & keep another ready for the morning, begging you will not be uneasy untill you hear from us, for be the event good or bad you shall be informed when any thing to be depended on comes to our knowledge. At this time we must observe that if we had met with any severe check, there wou'd have been numbers in, to tell the news. If we get the better, all will be willing to share the glory to the last and not fly to tell us what is passing. If we remain formidable nobody will be dispatched to tell us it; therefore the longer we remain in suspense the more favourable may be our conjectures.

Sorry we are to Close this letter with one disagreeable piece of intelligence. Capt Hallock late of the Brig Lexington appeared here a little while since he was taken by the Pearle Man of War in a Gale of Wind which was too high for the Enemy to take proper possession of her they sent a Midshipman & seven men onboard, took out Hallock, his Lieutt & some other officers for that night, intending to secure her better next morning but she parted & Hallock thinks his officers had retaken & carried her into some other port. He took a Brig from the Bay of Honduras & ordered her for the first safe Port. We are mortified exceedingly at this affair but if Genl Washington drives back the Enemy from Trenton we will seek revenge & with great respect remain Sir Your obedt Servants.  
For the Committee,

Robt Morris

[P.S.] Excuse bad pen, Ink & haste.



RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written and signed by Robert Morris.

<sup>1</sup> See William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke, January 7, 1777, note 1.

## Secret Committee to Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Sir

Congress 3d Jany. 1776 [i.e. 1777]

The Secret Committee request that you immediately put a Trusty Officer from the frigate Virginia on board the Lexington with orders to have her directly moved up to the place most fit for unloading her and to remain with the Brig until further orders. You Sir Will be pleased to take proper measures for landing, storing, and securing the Lexingtons Cargo. Let an Inventory thereof be taken and returned to us.

As there is no officer on board the Lexington that is acquainted with the business it will be the more necessary to have a very carefull person to attend her delivery, that all kind of pecu[la]tion may be prevented, and the business conducted with the greatest propriety.

If a Guard is wanted, may not Capt. Smith be applied to for the purpose.

For the Secret Committee,

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. There are on board three trunks and some loaves of Sugar belonging to the House of Willing & Morris, be so kind as have them taken particular care of.

R.H. Lee

RC (MiU-C). Written and signed by Richard Henry Lee.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore 3d Jany 1777

I some time ago desired you to look for two fast sailing vessels of about 60 to 80 tons to send here for iron and flour for the use of the Navy since which I am instructed by the Marine Committee to desire that you will immediately send two vessels to this place for those articles.<sup>1</sup> I hope there will be no difficulty in chartering them, this will be a considerable advantage to the State of New Hampshire as great part of the flour may be disposed of if it should be wanted as undoubtedly will be the case. You'll address these vessels to Messrs Saml and Robert Purviance, merchant here who will give them all possible dispatch, you have liberty to ship in each of them from two to three thousand dollars value in such articles as will best suit this market of which you will be informed by the Price Current inclosed by your govt.

By this conveyance, you'll receive directions from the Secret Committee, to load a ship with masts for France if you can purchase one suitable for masts.<sup>2</sup> This is an article that will be very acceptable there at this time, as

in all probability that nation is at the eve of a war. You will also be desired to send two small vessels to St Peters if you can procure suitable cargos for that market. I am apprehensive you'll want money by the time you get through this business, which will be sent you so soon as you let me know what sums you'll want. I wish to be constantly advised of your proceeding and of your wants that I may keep them supplied. The last letter I rec'd from you was of the 25th Novr.<sup>3</sup>

Since my last the Lexington arrived here from the Cape. She was bound to Philadelphia but was taken by the Pearl frigate of 32 guns off them Capes, who took out all the officers and put on board 7 or 8 men but the roughness of the weather prevented their taking out the people which were about 70 in number who under cover of the night brought her off and arrived safe here with a very valuable cargo of powder, arms, woollen goods &c. There is also another brig arrived here from the same place and same sort of cargo amounted to 200.000 livres. The last account from the army was 29th ulto. They were then following the enemy and hope they'll not stop till they have either destroyed them or drove them out of Jersey. The whole number taken at Trenton was about 1100—among which were 7 field officers—a few more such day's work as that of the 26th will cause our stocks to rise. It's now between 2 and 3 o'clock A.M. and I can hardly see. You'll therefore excuse this scratch. Your friend &c,

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> In response to these instructions, Langdon dispatched the *Dove* and the *Friends Adventure* to Baltimore. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1292.

<sup>2</sup> See Secret Committee to John Langdon, January 4, 1777. Langdon had proposed, as early as November 6, 1776, that the Secret Committee enter the mast trade on the public account. *Ibid.*, pp. 56–57.

<sup>3</sup> For an extract of Langdon's November 25, 1776, letter to Whipple, see *ibid.*, pp. 271–72.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir, Baltimore Jany. 4th 1777

Inclosed is a Letter to your Honor which was handed to Me by a Gentleman of the Secret Committee, who told me at the same Time that it came via South Carolina, and that the 21st of Oct. Preparations for War were making in France; but your Letter will doubtless furnish you with Intelligence on that Subject.

Since my last <sup>1</sup> nothing remarkable hath occurred. Several more of the Hessians who were posted at Trenton have since the late glorious exploit of Genl Washington been found skulking in cellars and other hiding Places among whom are One Lt Colonel and a Deputy Adjutant General, so that the whole Number when the Genl. wrote last, which was

the 29 or 30th of Decr., amounted to about One Thousand. This important Manœuvre hath given great Spirits to the good People in the Jersey and Pennsylvania, and they are flocking from those States to Genl. Washington. Some of the Militia too from the Lower Counties, from Maryland and Virginia are repairing to Philadelphia. Our Army by the last Accounts had rerepassed the Delaware and were in full Pursuit of the Enemy, who had deserted all their Posts on that River. Some of our Troops were within five Miles of a Body of Hessians, who had, its said, a hundred Waggons loaded with Stores &c with them, who, with their Stores, will in all Probability fall into our Hands; at least their Waggons, as our Men can doubtless move faster than they, will be taken by Us; and our main Body was within Eleven Miles March of the Enemy. Every Thing on the West Side of the North River wears now a brilliant Aspect. Genl. Heath hath entered Hackinsack and taken all the Stores amounting to a large Quantity, a few British Troops who had been left there to guard them, and some Tories. I am now confident that We shall drive the Enemy out of the Jersey. I am extremely anxious to hear how Affairs are in our State. The late masterly Stroke at Trenton, which would have been capital if the Ice had not prevented the execution of the Genls Plan in some of its Parts, will I hope animate our and the neighbouring States and urge them on to some noble Enterprize, against the Enemy in our Quarter. Much depends upon vigorous Efforts this Winter. Large Bodies of Militia will I trust be there as they are here collected and collecting, and make a bold grand Burst on the Foes to our Happiness. Seize the Opportunity which a Division of the Force of our Enemies hath given Us. Reinforcements, unless France should effectually interpose and prevent it, will infallibly be sent over in the Spring or early in the Summer. Therefore let me repeat it, seize the Occasion which the ill Policy of the Enemy presents. Burn the hostile Fleet, and drive the Enemy from Rhode Island if it be possible.

The Express, which will deliver this to you, carries the Loan Certificates to New York and the New England States. I hope this Plan for stopping the Progress of Depretiation will meet with Encouragement from our and all of the States. It gives me great Pleasure to find that our State hath appointed a Committee to consult with Committees from the other New England States upon Measures to prevent Depretiation and Monopolization. I know no better Way to effect the first than by lessning the Quantity of Paper-Bills, nor the latter than the State of Connecticut hath pursued. Monopolizing especially at such a distressing Time as this is most certainly highly criminal, and demands severe Punishment; and the Blood in the political System ought to be kept pure and incorrupt. From the Depretiation of our Money, and the Obstructions of Commerce, those Articles which are imported are risen to an astonishing Height, and every other Article keeps Pace with them. I thought

that Philadelphia was the dearest Place that ever I knew. Baltimore exceeds it. On this Account, on Account of its Distance from the Scene of War, and on Account of its being the dirtiest Place I ever saw, I most sincerely wish myself back to Philadelphia, which I left with great Reluctance. By a Letter which I receiv'd from Newport on the 6th of Dec. I am led to hope that my Wife and Children have escaped from Newport. If they should be Prisoners I hope you will promote their Freedom. I am with great Respect Yr Honor's most obedient, humble Servant,

Wm Ellery

RC (MdBj-G). Addressed: "To The Honorable Nicholas Cooke Esqr, Governor of the *(Colony)* State of Rhode Island & Providence Plantations."

<sup>1</sup> See Ellery to Cooke, December 31, 1776.

## Secret Committee to John Langdon

Sir, In Secret Committee Baltimore 4th Jan 1777

We some time ago desired you to purchase two or three ships and send them to Virginia, or South Carolina, since which we have not had the pleasure of hearing from you, but hope that business is in good forwardness.<sup>1</sup> We have now to desire you to purchase another ship and send her to France if a cargo can be procured at your place suitable for that market. No doubt masts will answer very well and perhaps some other articles of greater value may be procured—however of this you are a much better judge than we can be. Our wish is that the cargo may be valuable and that the ship may be dispatched as soon as possible.

Many articles that are much wanted in the army, we imagine may be obtained at the Islands, St Peters, Newfoundland. We therefore desire you would charter two small vessels (which should be very fast sailers) if cargos can be procured proper for that market<sup>2</sup> and order from thence canvas for tents, or any sort of woolen or linen goods suitable for soldier's clothing. Your drafts on this Committee will be duly paid, for whatever sums you may want for the execution of this business at the Islands of St Peters and Meguelon.

We are with great respect, your most humble servts,

Richard Henry Lee

F Lewis

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> For Langdon's progress in this regard, see his January 23 letter to Robert Morris in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1020.

<sup>2</sup> For Langdon's response to this request, see his January 23 letter to William Whipple, *ibid.*, pp. 1020–21.



## Secret Committee to Robert Morris

Sir,

Baltimore the 4th of January 1777

We have thought the expence of an Express warranted to carry you the inclosed, some of the contents demanding the most serious attention, & the quickest possible change in the situation of things that made those observations necessary. It is very true that we have exerted ourselves, but in some instances we have been unfortunate, and the difficulty of getting ships and seamen is certainly very great. However, you will see that balances are against us, and considerably so, both in the West Indies, and in Europe. That in consequence of this, our credit is hurt, at least, with Mr. Schweishauzer who seems unwilling to go an inch beyond what he has in hand. Good often springs out evil, and so, by the Friendship loosing her topmast, she made for Chesapeake and is safely arrived here with her cargo, which might have fallen into the enemies hands if the Brig had kept on for Delaware. We shall take care of this Cargo here, but the Vessel we wish your advice & assistance about.<sup>1</sup> We are agreed to charter her again if this can be done on terms that you approve, and here she may be immediately loaded, with Tobacco at least, and ordered to the place where you judge remittance to be most wanted. Will you Sir do, and advise us in this, what you think best. The Captain of the Friendship will wait here until the return of this Express. You will see the advance made by our Agent for arming the Brig. The books of the secret Committee are not here, nor any of the papers, so that we are illy fitted for conducting the business properly.

Mr. Gillon having imported into So Carolina, on his contract, 37,550 lbs. of Gunpowder, 500 stand of arms & 620 bushels of salt, we have paid him for the present £3500 this currency, for his part, upon account. We learn from Colo. Harrison that a Ship sometime loaded by his son in James River remains for want of seamen. Richard Henry Lee

Fra. Lewis

Wm. Whipple

P.S. We inclose you an order on Meade & Co. for £481.7.11 Pen. Cury. The Post coming in just now we shall send these dispatches by her. The great prospect we have of most valuable importations coming to Delaware, makes us very anxious, and we wish for many swift sailing Vessels without to give notice. The Lexington will sail hence in a few days for this purpose.

RC (PHC). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> On the 7th the same members of the Secret Committee wrote the following note to Samuel and Robert Purviance: "We expect the Brig Friendship will soon be up, and we request that you will have her discharged of her Cargo as quickly as possible and the same well secured for the use of the Continent." Middendorf Deposit, MdHi.



## Oliver Wolcott to John Lawrence

Sir,

Baltimore 4 Janry 1777

This will be delivered to you by the Person by whom Mr Hillegas sends the Loan Office Certificates into the eastern States, and by whom he also sends you an Order to pay out of the first Monies which you shall receive forty Thousand Dollars, upon the order of our Government.<sup>1</sup> The Certificates would have been Sent earlier, had not the Removal of the Congress to this Place prevented it. I am glad to hear that People are well inclined to lodge their Money in this office, as it is putting their Money to the best publick use, and also will be a Means of preventing a Redundancy of the common Circulation. As the Managers of the State Lottery are at Philadelphia I have not heard wheither they have Sent any of their Tickets into Connecticut. If it is not already done I hope it will Soon be so, As Money Matters are not only an Object of much Delicacy, but of the utmost Importance both in the Business of War and Commerce.

I have forwarded a Letter to Govr. Trumbull, which if it should be left in your Hand I wish you would transmit. I have also to beg of you that you would please to forward the Enclosed.

I Congratulate you Sir on the happy Success of our Arms in the Jersys the 25 ult. Farther Accounts Make the Number of the Enemy taken in that Action to amount to at least one Thousand. We flatter ourselves that We Shall Soon hear of farther Advantages Obtained in that Quarter, and that the Enemy will Soon be obliged to leave that country, where it is said their Oppression and Brutality has been most shocking so as to beggar all Description. This Severity May be (as I understand in many Instances it has been) a Means of convincing the unbeleiving of the Cruelty of the Power which oppresses Us.

Congress have directed Three Thousand of Cavalry and Sixteen additional Battalions of Infantry to be raised together with a Number of Artillerists, and have passed other Resolutions relative to the Army which they judged necessary to give it the greatest Energy, so that no Impediment or delay might prevent the fullest Exertions of the Military Power which Regulations you may Soon be more particularly informed of, as well as of the Reasons on which they are founded. I hope We may soon have a Very respectable Army in the Feild, an object which ought most sedulously to be attended to, in such a Circumstance, I trust We should soon confine the Enemy to Narrower Limits.

The Restrictions on the Exportation of Lumber are taken off, An Embargo on salted Provisions is laid till the first of Nov.

I am with Respect, sir, your Most Obedient and humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

P.S. Mr Sherman came yesterday to Congress and is well.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> At the October session of the Connecticut General Assembly John Lawrence, treasurer of Connecticut, had been appointed commissioner to superintend the loan office in Connecticut. *A Historical Collection, From Official Records, Files, &c., of the Part Sustained by Connecticut, during the War of the Revolution*, comp. Royal R. Hinman (Hartford: E. Gleason, 1842), p. 233.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada Jany 5th. 1777, 10 oClock

We have no doubt but our last letter by express will cause the Congress to be very anxious for further Accounts. Since that letter was dispatched we have remained entirely in a State of the most anxious expectation, always keeping an express ready to carry you any News that we cou'd write with certainty but as we have no certainty to this hour you will please to accept of the Substance of current reports brought down by various persons & which in general have gained belief here. We told you in our last that Genl Washington had drawn up his Army & taken post on the Hills on this side Trenton Bridge. He caused large Fires to be made & kept up and haveing recd certain intelligence that Genl Howe with a considerable reinforcement was on his march from Prince Town to join the Main Body at Trenton he decamped in the middle of that night, made a forced march & met Mr Howe about Maidenhead or at Quaker Bridge, gave him Battle, put him to the rout & took 500 to 700 Prisoners, pushed forward, took possession of Prince Town and 8 ps. of Canon, with a Number of Officers & the 40th Regiment & this Morning we are told he was still pursuing and determined to push on to Brunswick where are all the Enemies Valuable Stores &c.

That part of the Enemies army that possessed the part of Trenton on the other side of the Bridge never discovered Genl Washingtons march untill they heard the engagement. They then took possession of all the Heights and remained under Arms untill about Eleven oClock, when they marched of by the Penny Town Road, in order as is supposed to get on the other side our Army & join their Genl Howe. Genl Putnam march'd from hence yesterday with about 600 men, 500 follow to day & more are coming in every hour. We hear various reports of Genl. Heath being again on this side the North River & of the New England Militia coming down against New York, in short if all that we hear or half of it be true, Mr Howe will lose his Laurels & his Army be totally ruined but we do not vouch for the certainty of what we now relate. An Express shall follow soon as we gain

authentic Intelligence, in the mean time there is most undoubtedly room to Congratulate you on the present situation & prospects.

With the utmost respect we are, sir, Your Obedt Servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Jany 5th. 1777

We embrace the opportunity of Mr Leman & Mr Penrose two Gentn of the Light Horse to forward Seven Packets that came to our hands from Congress last Night. These Packets contain sundry resolves of Congress & a Number of blank Commissions.

The uncertain rumours of your Excellency's Success between Trenton & Prince Town and at the latter place, leave us in a most anxious State of suspence hoping every moment to be relieved therefrom by an express with dispatches from you.

We informed Congress of your situation on Thursday Evening at Trenton & prepared them to expect some important event, consequently they will have an anxious interval of Suspence as we now have.

The Continental Brig Lexington, Cap Hallock, was taken by the British Frigate Pearle, Cap Wilkinson, but the Wind blowing hard & the Sea Running high they cou'd only take out Capt Hallock, his Lieutt & other principal officers & in lieu of them they put onboard an officer & 8 Men with orders to keep Company untill morning. Before that came Our People onboard the Brig rose upon the British, bore away & have carried her Safe into Baltimore, by which means further supplies of Military Stores & Cloathing are secured as there is onbd Powder, Lead, Muskets, Blankets, Cloths &c. The Andrew Doria Prize is also arrived safe here. We suppose her late Commander Capt Jones must be given up for Cap Hallock who is come up from the Pearle under Parole.

Waiting impatiently for important News from you & with the best wishes for a Continuity of Success We remain Your Excellencys Obed Servants,

Geo Walton

Geo Clymer

Rob Morris

RC (DLC). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

## Richard Henry Lee to Adam Stephen

Dear General <sup>1</sup>

Baltimore 5 January 1777

Nothing could have happened more opportunely than the drubbing you have given the Hessians at Trenton. God grant the blow may be followed up until you expell these Robbers from the Jersies at least. If they do not get severe castigation for their late manœuvres in Jersey, they will sophisticate all Europe with lies. The *genius of America* seems now to be awakening from profound sleep. Let the moment be improved for making a vigorous and decisive impression. We have had several valuable arrivals lately with powders, woolens and arms. More are daily expected. But you seem now to have got into a shorter and surer method of obtaining these things by stripping the enemy. I heartily approve the plan. I am still of opinion that the Spring torch will light up a general war in Europe, but still we should be prepared to receive the enemy in every quarter. Both in public and in private as little should rest upon externals as possible.

Will you please to tell our Major Parker that I will forward his commission by the first good opportunity. Congress has adopted the European plan in offering six Hessian field officers for Gen. Lee. If it is not accepted, I hope a noble feud will take place between these foreigners and their British Allies.

I am, as of old, your affectionate friend, Richard Henry Lee

RC (CtY). Addressed: "Brigadier General Stephen in the Jersies. Favored by Colo. Hartley."

<sup>1</sup> Adam Stephen (1730?-91), who had been promoted to the rank of brigadier general in September 1776, was promoted to major general on February 19, 1777, but was dismissed from the service later in the year for being intoxicated on duty. *Appleton's Cyclopaedia of American Biography*.

## Board of Treasury to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety

Sir

Baltimore Jany 6th 1777

Capt Doughty, who has taken charge of the Loan Office certificates for the Eastern States, will be in want of a guard to escort him as far as Hartford in Connecticut.<sup>1</sup> I am therefore desird to request the favor of you to order one for that purpose, which we think ought to consist of six Horsemen, who will expedite the conveyance of these certificates. Capt Doughty will be in Philadelphia on the 10th Instant.

I am, on behalf of the board of Treasury, Sir, Your obedt Hbe Servt,  
Thos. Nelson jr.

RC (NN). Written and signed by Thomas Nelson.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:17-18.



## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 6th. 1777 12 oClock

We wrote you a few lines yesterday by Mr Murdock stating the Current reports as they then appeared to us. Since some alterations appear & we shall give you the present State of intelligence as we have just received it from Mr John Brown a Young Man of good Credit who was in the Action near Prince Town. He says that on Thursday Evening Genl Washington took post as mentioned in our former letters on the Heights on this side Trenton Bridge, that about 12 oClock that night, Genl Cadwalladers Brigade (to which Brown belongs) had orders to march, the rest followed, that they took a Circle & came into the Prince Road & about a mile on this side of that Town they found a party of the Enemy had posted themselves very advantageously, behind a Fence, their artillery in an orchard & a large part of their number so covered by a Hill that they cou'd not be hurt. The Philada associators being in Front were exposed to the first Fire of the Enemy. They were very eager & run up a Hill before they were formed. The artillery played so hot on them that they got into Confusion & retreated down the Hill again, there formed, marched up in good order, attacked & broke them, they pursued into Prince Town & found this party Consisted of 600 men. We took 140 Prisoners there, killed in the action & on the Road & at Prince Town about 100 Men & the Rifle Men who pursued the scattered remains of the Enemy brought in about 40 Prisoners. We took five Field pieces, a Howitzer, a Considerable Number of Blankets & as many stores of different kinds as our Waggons cou'd carry off. The Genl. did not think proper to make any stay at Prince Town knowing the Force of the Enemy left in his Rear to be very considerable and fearing to bring on a general Action whilst his Troops were so extreamly fatigued. They had neither Victuals nor Sleep from the time they quitted Trenton, & all their baggage left behind so that they were suffering extreamly with Cold, Hunger & Fatigue. In this Condition they pushed on untill they Crossed Mill Stone Creek & then leaving the Brunswick Road, they crossed to Somerset Court House a place distant about 7 to 9 Miles from Brunswick where they halted & staid that Night (Friday Night). On the March to this place a good many of our People got scatterd & parted from the army. Mr Brown was one of these, got lost in the Woods & almost famished & at length after meeting relief at some Country House he found some of the Enemy had got between him & our People, therefore he made back for this place. He says Genl Mercer & a Colo Yates of Virginia are killed, also a Capt Shippen of Mari[land]. These are the only officers of distinction lost on our side that he knows off & about 15 Privates. The Enemy had killed a Colo, a major, two or three Captains & about a dozen officers taken as he was told. He says that our army were in excellent Spirits



notwithstanding their Fatigue and he understood that Genl Heath was at Morris Town with a considerable number of Troops and was to join Genl Washington on Saturday, when they were to Surround Brunswick & attack it in all quarters. This is nearly the substance of Mr Browns account. You may fully depend that what he relates is exactly what he has seen & heard being a Young Man of Veracity. Capt James Nicholson has also just returned from Trenton again, he confirms all the above particulars having heard them at Trenton from other persons that had come in there. He adds also that an Express was come down from Genl. Washington to Genl. Putnam & pushed on from Trenton to Bordentown where he expected to meet him yesterday, & by the enclosed letter from Genl Putnam you will perceive he Crossed yesterday to Burlington & the Force he has with him; more are following constantly. Capt Nicholson further says that the Enemies Troops that lodged in Trenton on Thursday night, pushed for Prince Town soon as they missed our army, that they were greatly fatigued & harrassed & that the Country between Trenton & Prince Town was full of Stragglers that cou'd not get on fast enough. that they generally quitted the Road, got into the Woods and lost themselves & were divided into small parties of threes & fours, some of which came into Trenton & surrendered whilst he was there & the Country Militia having begun to rise was picking them up & bringing them in very fast. Those that surrendered said great Numbers of their Countrymen wou'd come in if they knew how well they wou'd be treated. It is now said that Ld Cornwallis Commands the Main Body of the Enemy consisting of between 4 & 5000 that was at Trenton & that Genl Howe is at Brunswick with about 3 or 4000. Genl. Washingtons Force we do not know but it was judged by Mr Brown to be 12,000. We think that is impossible, however he says the Country is undoubtedly rising & that he will gather Strength every day. Genl Heath is said to have from 3 to 7000 but we have no Certainty respecting him. The bearer of this who came express from Boston says he heard Genl. Heath was at Pecks Kill. Upon the whole, we are in a state of much uncertainty & anxiety, but hope soon to be agreeably relieved from it, our Militia come in daily. Colo Flemings Battalion is near at hand, part of Cooks is already here, the Jersey Militia turning out and our army will grow too formidable for the Enemy be the Event at Brunswick what it may. We know Congress will be anxious & soon as we can give it, they shall have information of what happens.

We opened the dispatches from Boston but finding our interposition unnecessary we send on the Express with these dispatches & this letter. You will find enclosed the Copy of a letter from Major Hubley & thereby learn the success of Major Mifflins expedition. You have also enclosed a letter from J. Trumbull, D. paymaster Genl. at Albany. Capt Hallock & his officers will go down to day to the Lexington but they must not go

out in her unless an exchange is made. We are in haste having detained the Express whilst we wrote this account but always, Sir, Your & the Congresses, most Obedt Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir, Baltimore Jan'y 6th. 1777

I have the Pleasure to enclose you sundry Resolves, Copies of which I have forwarded by this Express to Genl. Washington.

Genl. Lee's Situation has become rather critical and dangerous, as it is not improbable from Genl. Howe's Treatment of him, that he intends to bring him to Trial for Desertion. Mr. Eustace, his Aid de Camp, who arrived here last Night, says that Genl. Lee sent two Letters to Genl. Howe, both which were returned unopened, and enclosed under a Cover directed to *Lieutenant Colonel Lee*.

If Genl. Washington's Flag to enquire in what Manner he was treated and a spirited Remonstrance, should he have found it necessary to send one, have been dispatched, I am in Hopes, they will have a proper Effect, and induce Mr. Howe to lay aside all Thoughts of trying him, if he ever really entertained such Views. The late Success of this Gentleman has emboldened him to pull off the Mask; and he now openly assumes the Character, & copies the Manners of a Military Tyrant. His Treatment of Mr. Stockton is, to the last Degree shocking and inhuman, if Report is to be depended upon; and the Congress have so far paid Attention to it, that they have thought proper to direct Genl. Washington to make Enquiry into the Matter.<sup>1</sup>

Your Favour of the 3d inst. I recd. yesterday at two O'Clock in the Afternoon, and this morning laid it before Congress, who approve highly of your sending the Information it contains and are infinitely anxious to hear the Event. It is now one O'Clock P.M. and no Express as yet arrived; a Circumstance, which, in my opinion, augurs well. I have the Honour to be, with Sentiments of Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

[P.S.] Please to order the Letters Inclos'd to be deliver'd. You shall always have exact Copies of the Resolves which I send to the General, you have them now Inclos'd.<sup>2</sup>

Jany. 7th. We have an imperfect Acct. by the Post of the Engagement at Trenton—and are anxiously waiting for Particulars. In Hopes of receiving them, I have detained the Express till this Morning.

The Resolution sent you some time ago respectg the Magazine at York, is superceeded by the subsequent Resolve ordering one at Carlile.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and two portions of postscripts by Hancock. Addressed: "Robt. Morris Esqr. & others of the Come."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:12–13; and John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon, March 17, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Foregoing paragraph written by Hancock.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 6: 1033, 1044. Foregoing sentence written by Hancock.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 6th. 1777

The enclosed Resolves, which I have the Honour of transmitting, call for your immediate Attention; and I am to request you will take Measures in Pursuance thereof, as soon as possible.<sup>1</sup> Genl. Lee's Situation seems to be extremely dangerous and critical; and from Genl. Howe's Behaviour to him, it is highly probable, he will be brought to a Trial for Desertion. Genl. Lee, it is said, by Mr. Eustace his Aid de Camp, having addressed two Letters to Genl. Howe, received them both back again unopened, and enclosed under a Cover directed to *Lieutenant Colo. Lee*. I hope the Flag which Congress ordered to be sent to make Enquiry into the Manner in which he is treated, has been dispatched, and a Remonstrance in Consequence of it, should the Information you have received of his Treatment, have rendered that Step necessary.

You will please to propose an Exchange of the six Hessian Field officers for him, & at the same Time make Enquiry whether the Report which Congress have heard of Mr. Stockton's being confined in a Common Jail by the Enemy, has any Truth in it, or not.<sup>2</sup>

By a Letter which Congress yesterday received from Mr. Morris we are informed that Genl. Cadwallader, with the Troops under him, had joined your Army—that the Enemy were at Trenton—that the two Armies were divided only by a Creek, and that a General Engagement was hourly expected. In the mean Time, Congress are infinitely anxious to hear the Event; and humbly hope, that Victory has declared in Favour of those, whose sacred Cause should inspire them with Ardour on every solemn appeal to that Being, who hateth all Injustice, Tyranny, and oppression. I have the Honour to be, with every Sentiment of Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. John Hancock Presidt

P.S. If the Desire of Congress to procure Genl. Lee's Exchange cannot be effected, and the Enemy, preferring the Gratification of Revenge to the

Civility they owe their Hessian Auxiliaries, determine to keep or to abuse him, it will be very agreeable to Congress that their Determination, with the enclosed Resolve, be made known to the Hessians as fully as possible. To secure Genl. Lee as effectually as may be from personal Insult & Injury, Congress have come to the present Resolution; <sup>3</sup> which you, Sir, are desired to convey to Genl. Howe with all convenient Dispatch.<sup>4</sup> It will be very agreeable to Congress that the Hessian Field Officer intended to be exchanged for Colo. Ethan Allen be sent to notify it to Genl. Howe, taking his Parole to return in a fixt Time, if Colo. Allen is not returned in his Place. It will fall within the Wish of Congress if Colo. Rohl, or one of the Hessian Officers, should be also sent with the Flag proposing the Exchange of Genl. Lee; but the propriety of it is submitted to you.

Jan'y. 7th. We have had an imperfect Acct. of the Engagement at Trenton, and anxiously wait for further Particulars. It was in Hopes of receiving them that I detained the Express till this Morning.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves about General Lee and Richard Stockton discussed in the body of this letter, Hancock also sent Washington some resolves passed between January 3 and 6 about provisions for American prisoners, the exchange of Ethan Allen, reinforcements for Washington, and pay for seamen. *JCC*, 7:12, 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:10, 12-13; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:501-2.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:16.

<sup>4</sup> The preceding two sentences were evidently taken from a partial draft of the postscript prepared by Richard Henry Lee, a member of the committee appointed on December 20, 1776, to inquire into the condition and treatment of prisoners of war. Lee also apparently drafted the resolves concerning Ethan Allen and Charles Lee enclosed by Hancock in this letter. His drafts of these resolves and the postscript of this letter are in the Lee Family Papers, ViU.

## Robert Morris to John Hancock

Dear Sir

Philada. Jan'y 6th. 1777

I am favoured with yours of the 2d Inst and had much joy indeed, when I found the Lexington was arrived, because She wou'd be a mischievous Enemy, altho a very good Friend in proper hands.

I have directed the Captain & Officers to proceed down to Baltimore immediately judging they will be wanted in fitting her out again. Cap Hallock can also distinguish the Goods that are for Account of the Public from those on Other Account. I thank You for the promised care of those that are for me which I suppose to be the property of Mr. Ceronio at the Cape. I wou'd have them delivered to Mr. David Stewart to whom I give orders respecting them. Capt Hallock & his Officers are under parole and



I judge the Capt of the Pearle wou'd agree to release them from that Parole on giving him back his midshipmen and Seamen from the Lexington, if this is approved I will send onboard the Roebuck & propose it [to] Capt Hamond from whom I received a polite letter, copy whereof I transmit to Congress.<sup>1</sup> The Sloop Race Horse (Prize to the Andrew Doria) is now come in, I mentioned in a letter to Congress sometime since a desire to fit this Vessell out in the Service & I wish you wou'd procure such an order & that Lieut Dun whose birthright it is, be appointed to Command her, he is the oldest Lieutt in the Service & Capt Biddle & Capt Isaiah Robinson with whom he sailed give him the Character of a good Officer. This Prize being an armed & Commissioned Vessell of War belonging to King George, the Officers & Seamen of the Andw Doria are entitled the whole as also to a Bounty on the Guns & Men which I will see to have justly settled and if the Congress order the Sloop to be fitted I will order the purchase of her when Condemned. No Tidings of the Sachem yet. I fear she will not escape the Enemy for they are very thick on our Coast & have already taken several good Cargoes from us. They are so posted that Capt Biddle cannot possibly get past them and as this place seems now pretty secure I am not so anxious for him to run the Risque, as formerly, but had they come here with the British Army I was determined to have made a bold attempt to push out every Vessell we had here & so given them the only chance that was left. However we shall now get time to finish the whole whenever our Tradesmen return but at present we cannot go on for want of them and I have sent the Boats of our whole Fleet up the River to be ready to assist our army in Crossing the River shou'd any misfortune happen them. I wish most sincerely that our Tradesmen was [here?], we might finish the Two Galleys & send them [to] molest the Roebuck & her Companions in the Bay, however as we cannot perform all we wish let us do what we can & when Genl. Howe is got the better of, we will turn our thoughts again to Marine affairs.

At present the Land Service affords us ample employment & will do so untill something decissive happens. One of my letters to Congress wou'd inform you when Mr. Smith returned & the success he met on opening his Office, but you must know I prevailed on two Gentn that were going to N England with Considerable Sums of money to give Mr Smith the money & take Loan Office Certificates as this wou'd put the thing in motion, and to prevent their being disappointed I gave them letters to the Continental Agents requesting their assistance in procuring these Gentn money for those notes whenever they might want it.<sup>2</sup> I finally promised if they cou'd not succeed in getting money in that Country for the Certificates that I wou'd send it to them from here. The rest I got People to lend and as I find some People who have money & wou'd lend it dont choose to have their names appear as lenders, I will take the Certificates



in my name & then pass them for their money, [ . . . ] my Dr Sir I will promote this business by all means in my power. I am perfectly satisfied to have Alderman Lee joined with my Brother in the Continental business being convinced it will promote the Public good but at the same time such Commission or Compensation shou'd be allowed as will be sufficient for two instead of one, and I am confident they will both earn what they are to receive. The quantity of Tobo we shou'd ship to France ought to have no limit & sorry I am that the Vigilance of our Enemies, the Scarcity of Ships & Seamen with many other Causes keeps us from making the necessary progress, but our difficulties in this respect are almost insurmountable. I think we shall be in debt in every quarter, We must owe money in Martinico, St Eustatia & Cape Francois and I wish to remit to these places instantly if possible. We must be heavily in debt in old France if Mr Deane succeeds & whether he does or not we shall otherways be in debt if the Goods ordered are shipped. As things are now Circumstanced the Chance of getting out Merchant ships is against us, but I wou'd propose sending the Lexington & all our small Cruizers into the West Indias with orders to Carry their Prizes into the French Islands & send proper Powers to Mr Bingham &c to sell these in all cases that are clearly within the Laws of Congress, and in all probability these vessels will pay of your Debts & provide fresh Funds for further importations. If you approve of this Idea get the Congress to grant Mr Bingham a Commission or to empower the Marine Committee to give him instructions suited thereto, it may be very usefull & cannot hurt us in any shape.

I am now at the 7th & have recd the letter from the Secret Committee of the 4th and Congratulate you on the safe arrival of Capt Welsh, whom I had given up as taken by the Enemy. Capt Vicary who sailed with him is carried into New York. I am called upon by all the agents I have employed in the purchase of Tobacco for more money and must send it to them, but I think it is much better it shou'd be sent from Baltimore than that I shou'd send it from hence where money is so much wanted & daily called for, the purchase is considerable & really amounts to a great deal of Money and if we can but get the Goods to Market which in due time I hope we shall, it will make our affairs easy. As I judge it will be too troublesome to the Committee to divide this money amongst my Correspondents I propose sending down an Order in favour of Mr David Stewart & then I will give him directions to send by express the Sums necessary to each & I imagine it will require 80 to 100,000 Dollars to compleat the orders I have given them at different times which amot to several thousand hhd's of Tobo. the particulars of which I cannot ascertain here as my papers are out of Town. I will write to the Secret Committee on this Subject when I draw the bill & am in haste, Dr Sir, Your Obedt hble servt.

Robt Morris

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Capt. Andrew Snape Hamond's December 30, 1776, letter to Morris is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:629.

<sup>2</sup> See Morris to the Continental Agents, December 30, 1776.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 7th 1777

I received your Letter yesterday by an Express from Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> Your Express was so fatigued that he could not proceed immediately on, and therefore another was sent forward with it. I laid your Letter and the Resolve before Congress this Morning. They are disposed to do every Thing in their Power for the Benefit of the States, and have taken such Measures as they thought might be effectual to procure the Assistance you wish for. The Measures that have been taken to prevent the Enemy from penetrating the Country, and for expelling them from our State give Me vast Satisfaction. I hope the Troops in our Quarter will act on the offensive and with Spirit. Offensive Operations have proved successful, while our defensive Measures have been attended with Loss and Disgrace. I have in my last given you an Account of Genl. Washington's Success at Trenton on the 26th of last Month.<sup>2</sup> I wish I could give you the Particulars of his Success at the same Place on the 3d Instant. By private Letters by the Post yesterday it appears that he had gained a complete Victory over a large Body of the Enemy, pursued them to and took Possession of Princetown, and was still pursuing, captivating and destroying them when the last accounts reached Philadelphia. An Express is expected this Day; but as One sets off immediately for the last mentioned Place who will deliver this to your Express who was so fatigued that he could not come on, I cannot wait for the Particulars, and have only Time to add that I heartily congratulate you on our late Successes in the Jersey, that I wish equal Success to the Troops in our State, and that I am with great Respect, Yr Honor's most obedient, humble Servant,

Wm Ellery

P.S. I have requested Mr. Morris One of the Pennsylvania Delegates to send you the Particulars of the last Action by your Express.<sup>3</sup>

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Cooke's December 22, 1776, letter to Ellery is in William R. Staples, ed., *Rhode Island in the Continental Congress, 1765-1790* (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1870), pp. 108-10. There is no mention of it in the journals of Congress.

<sup>2</sup> Ellery is probably referring to his December 31 letter to Cooke, which is actually his next to last letter to the Rhode Island governor.

<sup>3</sup> No letter from Ellery to Robert Morris has been found, but see Robert Morris to Nicholas Cooke, January 9, 1777.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir Philada. Jany 7th. 1777, 12 oClock

Capt. George Harvy of the Light Infantry of the 3d Battalion of Philada Associators is just come in with the enclosed letter from the General,<sup>1</sup> which fully explains the reasons of his movements as well as his present situation & leaves us nothing but good wishes to add on that subject. We also received the enclosed dispatches from the Convention of New York, the Address to their Constituents we have detained in order to have it Copied and Translated, doubting whether Mr Lewis can get it done with the same convenience in Baltimore.<sup>2</sup> The original shall be sent forward to you soon as it is Copied. The Continental Schooner Georgia Packet arrived last night from Georgia & the Captain says he did not see any Men of War in our Bay. We hope they may be gone for N York again but must send down to see before any movements can be made with our Shipping and We fear being interrupted by Ice. Mr Byers who formerly Cast Brass Field pieces in New York has been with us this morning. He says the Furnace erected here by the Council of Safety will do with a very little alteration. Mr Rittenhouse & Mr. Owen Biddle To Members of that Council are ingenious men & have some knowledge in this business, & we think it wou'd be best to desire the Council of Safety to Conduct that Work at the Continental Expence & for the Continental service as long as they can find proper Metals & Materials. We have spoke to those Gentn on the Subject & find them willing to undertake it if requested so to do. We have the honor to remain sir, Your obedt hble servts,

Robt Morris

Geo. Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 5 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:437-40, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:467-71.

<sup>2</sup> The New York Convention's December 28 letter to Hancock and its December 23 address to its constituents are in PCC, item 67, 1:372-92, 402-5, and *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1382-88, 1466-68. This address was later translated into German by Lewis Weiss and printed under the title *Zuschrift aus dem Versammlung der Repräsentanten des Staates von New York an die, welche sie dazu bestellt haben* (Philadelphia: Steiner and Cist, 1777). *JCC*, 9:1081. In the rush of business, Congress overlooked the Executive Committee's plan to have this document translated and ordered Francis Lewis to make arrangements for the translation instead. The members of the Executive Committee interpreted this action as a rebuke to them and were only mollified after Hancock explained that it had been nothing more than an oversight by Congress. See *JCC*, 7:42; *Pa. Council Minutes*, p. 100; Executive Committee to Hancock, January 26; and Hancock to the Executive Committee, January 29, 1777. There is an interesting comparison of the convention's address (which was written by John Jay) with Thomas Paine's *The Crisis* in Jay, *Papers* (Morris), 1:359-61.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Jan'y 7th 1776 [*i.e.* 1777]

I was this day honoured with your favour of the 5th Inst. which arrived in time to forward the enclosures by Post. We waited with impatience to learn the consequence of your late movements and have been highly gratified, at the same time we see plainly some Important event is still to happen, the Enemy must mean to evacuate the Jerseys or to give you Battle. The latter may be ruinous in its consequences to either party & therefore its probable will only be sought for by those that have the superiority, this we fondly hope will fall to your lot, if joined by Genl. Heath & Genl McDougal & the Jersey Militia as we are taught to Expect will be the case. Should they loose a Battle or evacuate Jersey, surely they cannot afterwards make out a decent paragraph for Gaines infamous paper<sup>1</sup> after being out General'd & obliged to abandon the Country they thought themselves Securely possessed of. Your Excellency will find enclosed a paper herein, drawn up by a Capt Gamble lately a prisoner onboard the Fleet in New York.<sup>2</sup> He declares that the Treatment of both Sea & Land Prisoners in that place is Shocking to Humanity. This man deserves Credit & his account of their Ill usage is confirmed by all the Prisoners that come from thence. As to the information he gives at the bottom of his paper he says he will forfeit his life if every tittle of it is not as near to the Truth as possible for an inquisitive man in his situation to come at. We think this wou'd be a good time to remonstrate to Genl Howe & Lord Howe against the base usage our People meet with and to Threaten immediate retaliation of the British prisoners in our possession if they did not alter their Conduct.<sup>3</sup> It is probable Genl Howe may say it is Contrary to orders & not with his knowledge if our people Suffer, but this is not sufficient. Our poor Soldiers & Sailors are perishing for want of Food, fresh air & cleanliness, whilst those of theirs in our possession are feasting on the fat of this land. They have said we Treat them well through fear. It is time to Convince them we are not afraid, altho we are actuated by principles of Humanity, but those principles now Dictate the necessary of severe usage to British Officers in particular that they may hereafter make it a point for their own sakes to see proper care taken of those that fall within their power. Depend on it good Sir We do not write in this stile to gratify any feelings of our own, they are all repugnant to what we propose. Lieutt Josiah has just called on us & confirms the acct of Ill usage &c. He says he was exchanged for Lieutt Ball & that no person has been given up for Lieutt. Boger now in New York. There is a Cap Burke that was formerly Cap Manlys Lieutt. in his successfull Cruizes. Burke succeeded to the Command of Manlys Vessell, was taken by the Liverpool Frigate to which Mr Boger belongs & Cap Bellew sent Burke to N York for the express purpose of having him ex-



changed for Boger, & as he is said to be a very good officer, has been Ill used and suffered a good deal, we dare say your Excellency will demand his release by the First Flag.

We have the honor to be, Sir, Your Excellencys Obedt Servts.

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DLC). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Gaine was printer of the *New York Gazette; and the Weekly Mercury*, a loyalist newspaper.

<sup>2</sup> Capt. William Gamble, a Pennsylvania naval officer, had been in command of the schooner *Colonel Parry* when it was captured by the British in November 1776. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:877n.2.

<sup>3</sup> On January 13 Washington wrote a letter to Lord Howe, enclosing Captain Gamble's "paper" and criticizing British treatment of American naval prisoners. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:3-5.

## Francis Lewis to the New York Council of Safety

[January 7, 1777]

I lately wrote you by an Express, wherein I informed you that the State of New York was not represented in Congress, nor indeed has it been for several months past, except at some small intervals.<sup>1</sup> I am at present the only Delegate for New York at this place, and the Members are continually urging me to request you would compleat your representation in Congress, as business is now multiplying upon their hands, and so many members detached upon Committees &c that the business in Congress is retarded, add to this that our state sometimes suffers for the want of a Vote in Congress, which I beg you would speedily remmedy.<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be respectfully, Gentlem, your very Humble Servt, F. Lewis

RC (NN). Endorsed: "Baltimore Jan. 7th 1777." See also *Journals of the N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:776, 782.

<sup>1</sup> See Lewis to the New York Committee of Safety, December 27, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> On January 22 the committee of safety read a report on Lewis' letter offering suggestions for improving attendance among the New York delegates but deferred action on it until the New York Convention met. *Journals of the N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:776, 782; and *Calendar of Historical Manuscripts relating to the War of the Revolution, in the Office of the Secretary of State, Albany, N.Y.*, 2 vols. (Albany: Weed, Parsons, and Co., 1868), 1:605-6.



## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore 7th Jany. 1777

My last was of the 4th inst<sup>1</sup> since which I have not had any of your favors; as that letter goes by a person who has the charge of money part of the way this may reach you first. I therefore repeat part of that letter which is to desire you to send two vessels of 60 and 80 tons each to this place for iron and flour addressed to Samuel and Robt. Purviance. The iron will be wanted for the ship and the inhabitants will be glad of all the flour that can be spared from the public service. You have liberty to send in each vessel to the amount of 3000 dollars on the public acct in such articles as will best suit this market of which you may form a judgment by the price current enclosed and please to send me one Quintal best dun fish in each vessel. I believe a few Quls. of fish of an inferior quality for sale would do very well as there is none to be purchased here. By the same conveyance and under the same date of my last you'll receive a letter from the Secret Committee desiring you to purchase a ship and load her for France with masts and such other articles as you can procure suitable for that market, also that you charter two small vessels provided you can procure suitable cargoes for St Peters Newfoundland for the purpose of procuring woolen and linen goods for soldier's clothing and canvas for tents. If this letter comes first to hand you'll immediately set about this business as no time should be lost. My last inclosed you an account of a successful attack at Trenton on the 26th ulto since which our army have been vastly increased by the Militia and some regular Troops. The last authentic accounts are that the enemy's main body were advanced to Trenton and our's on this side Trenton bridge preparing for a general attack, a very heavy firing was heard the next morning being the 3d inst so that no doubt some great event has taken place before this hour, indeed some letters from Philadelphia say that the enemy are retreating and our people pursuing and have got as far as Princeton. However, an express is hourly expected, so I may have the pleasure of closing this with some very agreeable intelligence, but as the scene of action is between us it's probable you'll have earlier intelligence than I can give. This year my friend is big with mighty events, nothing less than the fate of America depends on the virtue of her sons, and if they have not virtue enough to support the most glorious cause that ever human beings were engaged in, they don't deserve the blessings of Freedom.

It's now 10 o'clock and no express from the army, and as the express by whom this goes, is just setting off must close this wishing you happy.  
Your friend &c,

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See Whipple to Langdon, January 3, 1777.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Jany 8th 1777

I have several times referrd you to a Hint which I gave you in a Letter not long ago, and which I have not thought it prudent to repeat, lest by an Accident my Letter should be intercepted.<sup>1</sup> I have still the same opinion of the Importance of this Affair; but having conversd with General Gates who is now in this Town, upon that and other Matters, we have concluded upon a more sure Way of effecting it, than that which I proposed to you. I wish therefore, if you have already communicated it to any of our Friends, you would injoyn them to close Secrecy, and that it may be even forgot by them till the Event of it shall be known to the World.

I am much pleasd to find that the New England Troops have so great a Share in the Honor of the late Action at Trenton. Genl Gates speaks very highly of the Militia you sent him the last Fall. He applauds greatly their Zeal for the Cause, and particularly their Readiness to tarry in the Service after the Expiration of the Term of their Inlistments in November, and he tells me he gave them an honorable Discharge. I have not the Pleasure of knowing Genl Brickett, but he mentions him to me as a worthy good officer.

We have further good Accounts from our Army, which are credited although they are not yet authenticated. I verily beleive that the Incursion of the Enemy into the Jerseys will in the Event be much to our Advantage, and that this Campaign will end gloriously on our side. I never will be sanguine in my Expectation, for I know the Events of War are uncertain; but there seems to be an enterprizing Spirit in our Army which I have long wishd to see, and without which we may not expect to do great Things. The same enterprizing Spirit also takes Place here. We have done Things which I would not have flattered myself with the least Hope of doing a Month ago. This Express will carry to the Council a Resolution which I presume will be communicated to you of Course.<sup>2</sup> Hereafter I will give you a very particular and good Reason why it is not communicated *to you* in this Letter.

We understand that by the Enemies Treatment of General Lee there is a Design to try him as a deserting officer and take away his Life. Congress have directed General Washington to acquaint General Howe, that if this is his Intention, five of the Hessian Feild Officers now in our Hands together with Lt. Colo Campbel will be detaind and sacrificed as an atonement for his Blood, should the Matter be carried to that Extremity; and this Resolution will most undoubtedly for my opinion be executed in full Fate. Your second and last Letter which was very short, was dated the 2d of Decr. I am disappointed every Post in not receiving your favour. Adieu my Freind,

S Adams

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Adams to James Warren, January 1, 1777, note 3.

<sup>2</sup> For the congressional resolution ordering the detention of Lt. Col. Archibald Campbell "till the farther order of Congress," see *JCC*, 7:16; and John Hancock to George Washington, January 6, 1777.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen

Wednesday Morning [January 8, 1777]

We remain in the most anxious Suspence. Some important Event has taken place, but We are unable to inform the particulars.

The enclosed is a Copy of a Letter from the Committee of Congress to Mr. Hancock.<sup>1</sup> I have no Leave to make it public; I send it to give You all the Intelligence in my power. It may be shewn but not printed.

Our State is still unrepresented, & every day matters of the greatest Importance are debated and determined in Congress.

I am afraid our Recruiting Service will be greatly injured unless Satisfaction be given to the officers. I beleive many Reasons will occur to convene the General Assembly as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> Many Reports from Somerset County cause Uneasiness here, & if true, demand speedy and vigorous Measures.

I have just heard of this Conveyance, & drop this Line from Grants Tavern.

I am, Gentn, with Respect, Yr. obedt. Servt.                      Saml. Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> Chase enclosed an extract from the Executive Committee's January 5 letter to President Hancock. See *Md. Archives*, 16:28.

<sup>2</sup> Chase had made the same recommendation in his January 3 letter to the council. For the council's response, expressing their reluctance to call the assembly into special session, see *ibid.*, pp. 34-35.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 8th. 1777

The dispatches sent herewith came to hand last Night about 9 oClock.<sup>1</sup> but Capt Bloomfield who brought them being unwell could not proceed to Baltimore, and as they are of much Consequence we have judged it proper to send them on by Express. Since sending you the Generals letter we have heard by a Captain Stiles that he had left Pluckamin & was marching as Mr. Stiles immagines, towards Morris Town. The British Forces it is said Crossed the Rariton on Saturday Night & the Hessians

were to follow on Sunday morning. We observe the General is extremely cautious in his letters & gives only such intelligence as he is pretty certain of, there are others in his Army, that write with less restraint & say that in a few days the Jersey's will be cleared of the Enemy, that Genl Heath & Genl. McDougal were expected to join our Army very speedily with considerable reinforcements, and it is reported that Genl McDougal has Killed & taken prisoners sixty Waldeckers near Newark. Genl Putnam is also on his march after them & we hear he is considerably reinforced by New Jersey Militia. Colo Fleming is arrived here with about 200 of the 9th Virginia Regiment the remainder he expects this Night. We shall order them Cloathing & money to discharge their arrearages & then to march up for the army. Nothing further occurs at this time except that we are always, sir, Your obedt hble servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

P.S. The enclosed Note from the President of the Council of Safety recommends Mr. Lewis Pintard of New York as a proper person to reside there as agent for Prisoners & We believe he is so.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:31.

## Elbridge Gerry to John Adams

Dear sir

Baltimore Jany 8th. 1777

Since you left Philadelphia many important Events have taken place in the Council as well as the Field; those that are publick you are undoubtedly informed of, the others I shall hint as they occur to my Mind.

Congress have ordered arms & Equipage for 3000 Horse & 150 brass Field pieces to be imported without Delay. The General to expedite Business is invested with Great Powers, which are to continue six Months unless sooner revoked by Congress, & are confined to the person of G. Washington; amongst other Things he is to raise, establish, & appoint the Officers for 3000 light Horse & as many of the Train; to officer & raise sixteen new Batalions, which in Addition to 94 before ordered make 110 of Infantry; wherever he is, to take whatever he wants for the Use of the Army, from those Who shall refuse to supply him for continental Currency, & profer the same, to the Amount of the apprizd Value of the Goods taken; to displace any officers under the rank of Brigadier & to fill up their places, as well of officers in other Departments. Three Magazines of military stores are to be provided, in Virginia, Lancaster in Pennsylvania, & Brookfield in Massachusetts. A Committee is



appointed to prepare a Report for regulating the Business of the Boards of War, Commerce, Admiralty, Treasury, Ordnance & Indian Affairs, & for conducting them by Gentlemen not Members of Congress. I wish to have your Sentiments fully on each of these six Departments with an Arrangement of the several officers & their respective Powers. Further the Treaty is revised & Applications are made to [France]<sup>1</sup> for the Loan of two Millions Sterling in Specie & a supply of 100,000 stands of Arms; Commissioners are to be sent to the Courts of Madrid, Prussia, Vienna & Tuscany; Doctor [Franklin] to the first. The Commissioners are instructed to inform their respective Courts, that Congress are informed of the insidious & artful Designs of the Court of G Britain to represent them, & the Inhabitants of these States as having an Inclination to return again to the Domination of his Britannic Majesty, & that it is the Determination of both the Government & People at every Event to maintain their Independence. The Commissioners at the Courts of [France] & [Spain] are to use every Means in their power to procure a Declaration of War against G. B. & as an Inducement to propose to the first, that all the Trade between these States and W I Islands shall be carryed on in [French] & American Vessels; to offer provisions to the Amount of 2,000,000 of Dollars & six Frigates of not less than 24 Guns each, at the Expence of the United States for carrying on Expeditions for reducing to the Government of [France] the British West India Islands (& all other Assistance in our power as good & faithful Allies;) to propose by the united arms of [France] & the States to deprive G Britain of any share in the Cod fishery by reducing Nova Scotia, Newfoundland & Cape Breton, & when the same shall be accomplished it is further proposed that the Fishery shall be enjoyed by [France] and the united States to the Exclusion of all other Nations whatever, Newfoundland to be divided between [France] & the States & [Breton?]<sup>2</sup> annexed to the States. The Commissioner at the Court of M[adrid] as an Inducement for declaring war are to propose to his C[hristian] Majesty the assistance of the States to reduce the Town & Harbour of Pensacola, & annex the same to his Territory & Government; & if the King of Portugal has caused any of our Vessels to be confiscated, to engage in behalf of the States that War shall be declared against the sd King, if the Measure is approved & will be supported by both the Courts before hinted. All the Commissioners are to solicit the Interpositions of the several Courts for preventing further Embarkations of Foreign Troops to America & recalling such as are now here.<sup>2</sup> General Washington is to offer six of the Hessian field Officers in Exchange for General Lee, & if General Howe refuses this, to inform him, that these with a favorite British Officer in our Custody shall share the same Fate as the General; of whose Sincerity by the by I think there is now no Reason to doubt. This Resolution will at all Events be carryed into Execution, if I can form any Judgment of the Firmness of Congress, for the General not being in the actual Service of G Britain



cannot be considered as they are desirous of representing him, a *Deserter from their Army*, he had doubtless a Right to give up a pension allowed him for Services heretofore performed, & having done this evidently ceases to be a servant of or connected with the Crown & could not as an officer be called to Duty; he had therefore as good a Right to engage in the Service as any Inhabitant of these States & will be so considered by Congress. Upon this Head I shall be also glad to have your opinion, since the Consequence may be a War without Quarter & the greatest Care should be taken to proceed on Justifiable principles which I think We are in this Case evidently pursuing.<sup>3</sup>

The Reduction of Fort Cumberland & Destruction of the Dock Yard & Magazines at Halifax are objects of great Importance; & if Matters are well conducted, they appear to me to be feasible. The Gentleman wch You sent to Mr. Adams has been before Congress, & they have come to a Resolution That the Council of Massachusetts B. be impowered to attend to the Situation of the Enemy in that Quarter & when they are of Opinion that an advantageous Attack can be made, to raise, subsist, officer & pay a Body of Men not exceeding 3000 for carrying on the Expedition in the Course of the Winter or early in the Spring, to prepare & convey to any parts of the eastern Counties of Massachusetts Sufficient Magazines of military & other Stores, & to draw on Congress for Money for these purposes.<sup>4</sup> General Gates is here & is well acquainted with Mr. Allen's Father as well as himself, the former by Mr. Allen's Account is a half pay officer, he himself was a Member of the Assembly & says he left the province to avoid taking the Oath of Allegiance. His Wife, Family & Effects are now in Nova Scotia, & therefore it may be necessary to be on our Guard, & take other Measures to gain Intelligence lest We be decoyed into a military Trap, which an Enemy experienced in the Arts of War will be continually attempting. You will undoubtedly see some Members of the Council & push the Matter as far as may be prudent; It is supposed that the Militia of the eastern Counties wch cannot be brot into the Field will readily engage for 3 or 4 Months to accomplish this plan, that if the Information of Mr. Allen "that the Enemy there are not above 800 Strong" should be confirmed, the Matter can be conducted with such Secrecy as to take the Enemy by Surprise, that if they have Intelligence of our Intentions after Orders arrive in the eastern Country to embody the Men, Time will not admit of their receiving Reinforcements before the Expedition is carryed thro, that Stores can be conveyed without any suspicion of this Kind previous to the Order for raising the Levies, by pretexts which Massachusetts Inhabitants are dexterous to fabricate & that General Washington who has a Copy of the Resolve will furnish a General if wanted.

Congress since their Removal from Philadelphia are exceedingly spirited & united; I was against leaving it but hope they will never return to that Sepulchre of Genius & Enterprize. The Nabob S & N Carolina continue to be Antipodes to the rest, & to sharpen Steel whetstones are necessary. I

think the Intention of the Enemy next Campaign is to press N England in every quarter, & that by proper Exertions they will be foiled with their intended Reinforcements. The Support of the Credit of our Money is the only Difficulty that rests on my Mind, & I doubt not it will be soon removed. Pray communicate to the Speaker, Major Hawley & Colo. Orne with my best Respects such parts of the Letter (if Opportunity offers) as You shall think proper & believe me to be sir your assured Friend & hum sert,

E Gerry

P.S. We are in Expectation of important Intelligence from the Jersies, should our Arms be successful we shall push on this Side for driving the Enemy from N York; pray follow the Blow from N England & press them by the Way of Kings Bridge With your new Levies. I doubt not they will be stirred at Newport. Doctors Morgan & Stringer are dismissed from the Service in Consequence of the Clamours of the people, & their Misconduct.

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Words supplied in *italic*, where Gerry left dashes in the MS, here and below.

<sup>2</sup> These proposals are the heart of the additional instructions for the American commissioners in Europe that were adopted by Congress on December 30, 1776. *JCC*, 6:1054-58.

<sup>3</sup> For further information, see John Hancock to General Washington, January 6, 1777, note 1.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:18, 20. The Massachusetts General Court proposed a similar plan to Congress in a December 30, 1776, letter, which was apparently not read in Congress until January 23, 1777. *JCC*, 7:59; James Bowdoin to John Hancock, December 30, 1776, PCC, item 65, 1:155-78, and *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1501

At this point, Congress was acting on information brought by John Allan, who with Jonathan Eddy was chiefly responsible for attempting to persuade Massachusetts and Congress to supply military backing for the small revolutionary party in Nova Scotia. When the news of the failure of an ill-planned expedition led by Eddy against Fort Cumberland reached Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Council, despite the urging of Congress, hastily resolved on January 30, 1777, not to undertake an expedition "at this time."

Allan returned to Boston, however, and continued to lobby for a military presence in Nova Scotia. On March 25 the Massachusetts General Court endorsed the establishment of two forts on the St. John River in Nova Scotia, but the arrival of a British fleet in the St. John River bay in August 1777, convinced Massachusetts leaders to abandon the scheme of offensive action in Nova Scotia. *JCC*, 7:34, 38-39; George A. Rawlyk, *Nova Scotia's Massachusetts: A Study of Massachusetts-Nova Scotia Relations, 1630 to 1784* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1973), pp. 231-46. See also John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council, January 10, 1777.

## John Hancock to Archibald Bulloch

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 8th. 1777.

I have the Honour to enclose you a Copy of an intercepted Letter from the Governor of East Florida to Lord George Germain, containing, among others, the most convincing Proof of the treasonable Conduct of

Mr. George McIntosh of your State. This Gentleman it seems is a Member of the Congress in Georgia, and under that Character, is secretly supporting by every Act in his Power, the Designs of the British King & Parliament agt. us.<sup>1</sup>

The United States of America have hitherto suffered extremely from the Misrepresentation of their Enemies; but much more from the Baseness and Perfidy of their pretended Friends. I have it therefore in Command from Congress to request that you will cause the said George McIntosh to be immediately apprehended, and take every other Step in this Matter, which shall appear to you to be necessary for the Safety of the United States of America. I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir your most obed. & very hble Servt. J.H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "To President of the State of Georgia."

<sup>1</sup> In a July 19, 1776, letter to Secretary of State George Germain, Gov. Patrick Tonyn revealed that William Panton, a well known loyalist who resided in East Florida, had recently brought a cargo of rice to St. Augustine from Georgia and alleged that Panton had been assisted by George McIntosh, a member of the Georgia Council of Safety whom the governor described as a secret adherent of the king. PCC, item 73, fols. 35-38. Hancock's letter eventually led the Georgia state authorities to send McIntosh to Congress to plead his case. On October 8, 1777, McIntosh submitted a memorial to Congress in which he affirmed his loyalty to the American cause and, while admitting his involvement with Panton in a commercial venture to ship a cargo of rice to Surinam, denied any knowledge of Panton's plan to bring this cargo to St. Augustine instead. Congress decided that although McIntosh had been indiscreet in associating with a known loyalist, there was insufficient evidence to warrant his detention on a more serious charge, and on October 10 it ordered his release. See *JCC*, 7:8-9, 9:764-65, 787-90; and PCC, item 41, 6:33-40. There are also ancillary documents about this case in PCC, item 73, fols. 19-33, 39-41, 43-47, 99-104, 108-11, 123-32; and a fuller discussion of it in Kenneth Coleman, *The American Revolution in Georgia, 1763-1789* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1958), pp. 88-89.

## Benjamin Harrison to Robert Morris

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Jany 8th. 1777

Your two favor of the 29th ulto. and 2d Inst.<sup>1</sup> I have had several Days and should have answer'd them sooner, but have been very unwell ever since Friday last. I have taken my last Dose I hope to Day and that I shall be about again to-morrow; I do not know that I have been so vex'd with my self for some time, as I am for not informing you that the secret Come. of Cor[respondenc]e has bot a fast sailing vessel which is now ready to sail for Nantes, and is only detained for a Certain acct of our Generals success. Faulty as I am, you must give me some little Credt. when I tell you it proceeded from my not doubting your getting the Information from



The Henry Fite House



the Secret Comme who are not able to answer the Letters they recd on the subject of trade without your assistance. They have Receivd Volumes from Pliarne & Compy. who must think strangely of you if they do not get satisfactory answers to them, which I am sure they will not do, as the answer I [was?] deliver'd could not contain the tenth part of it, which lead to the enquiry whether you had been inform'd of the Vessels going or not. Besides the dispatches that will go by the above Schooner, we have others prepared for Buchanans ship which it is expected will sail to day, or tomorrow. We have not heard a Word of Pirates on this Coast, if any appear you shall most assuredly be advised as soon as the acct reaches us. I will forward the money to Ben when you shall please to order it, and I get a good oppy.<sup>2</sup> I fancy he will soon want it, as he writes me Tobacco rises fast, he has been oblig'd to get up as high as 20/ for some fine Crops, driven to it by Pleasants, who is buy[ing] all the good he can lay his hands on at that price, for the Torey Quakers in your Town.

I wish Congress may remove back with all my Heart, for I am most cursedly Vex'd with this Place, indeed I had like to have been so with Philada. Nothing but the little circle of acquaintance I had there prevented it but this tryal of Baltimore will make me (if possible) set a much greater Value on them but on the Town most certainly, however I am told the Yankeys are against it, if so we *go not*, they Rule as absolutly as the Grand Turk dos in his own Dominions. I could give you an instance of it, but it must not be committed to Paper.

The arms were order'd to the head of Elk for two Reasons, one that they might be in a place of Safety, the other that the Virga Regiments might be sure of good arms. They are to leave their own behind them, and expect to be furnish'd at that place and I know they had rather carry them with them and appear in Character, than go like no body knows who, however if they get them I am content, but I doubt their doing it, as I see Towers has deliver'd them all to the Council of Safety. God grant that Philada may be a place of safety, I think it will, if the Life of our worthy General is preserved, but I tremble for him, every officer complains of his Exposing himself too much. Your Letter to the President wch came to hand yesterday releived us from great anxiety, there were such number P[urvianc]e and R[ush] Lies circulated that we knew not what to think, particularly as we had not a Word from you. We are now in high Spirits waiting for a Confirmation of what you write, with Glorious additions, but know my Dear Sir I have my moments of Fear, dispell them quickly I beg of you. I never was better pleased than to find your People turning out as they do, I wish a little Spark could be sent here. All is either Confusion or Languor, or what may be worse. The Colony has never yet been represented. How could the man I Loved and Respected turn Rascal, I knew his Principles of Politics were not quite right, but I expected his objections would be soon done away, and that he

would be again returned to us, but alas I have been totally mistaken in him, he was ever mark'd, you know I must mean A.A.<sup>3</sup>

O that if of yours, if we are but Honest in Publick Councils & ca; look at the Paragraph mark'd thus X and find it answered.

I most sincerely thank you for your kind wishes to see me again at the Hills, I generally appropriate some moments on Sunday to that Place let me be where I will, but in this infernal Sink I scarcely think of any thing else, there is not even a Tavern that we can Ride to for Exercise and amusement within 15 miles of the Place, I mean such as a Gentn can dine in with Comfort. My Compliments to Walton. I have Recd his two Favors <sup>4</sup> and would write to him but really have nothing to say that can either give him pleasure or amusement. I have a wish that his Country was Represented, but alas it is not, you may as soon change the Devil into an angel of Light as a C——t man into any thing else. He should not if I could help it stay where he is if he could be of Service here, but as he can not I leave him to assist you and to Toy away a Leasure Hour now and then with his Fille de Joy.

I am much oblig'd to my Friend Mease for the Sugar and for geting the Chairs, how we shall get them I know not without he can prevail on his *Good Friend Jonathan Mifflin* to take them on board one of his Shallops. I am, Dr Sir, your affect Hble Servt, Benj Harrison

P.S. Ben seems to wish himself clear of his Place. Will his Resigning it be any Prejudice to his Commission Business; if not I shall approve of his doing it, he will be able to attend the latter more closely. Two Troops of Horse are come in from Virga, they will move on briskly to-morrow, the whole six will be with you by Wednesday, order stables for them, they want a great Number of Carbines.

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> Morris' January 2 letter to Harrison has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Morris to Harrison, December 29, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Allen.

<sup>4</sup> George Walton's letters have not been found.

## Robert Morris to Silas Deane

January 8, 1777

I am now arrived at the 8th of January 1777 without having had any opportunity of dispatching this Letter, as there are constantly 6 or 8 sail of the Enemies ships cruising in our Bay and off the Capes where they have taken many of our inward bound vessells & effectually blocked up all those we have in this Port. This detention affords me the pleasure of giving you a detail of what has passed since the 20 Decr. when the above was written & thank God the picture will be more pleasing to you as the

Reality has been to me. You'll observe in my former narrative I left the Enemy posted at all the little Towns & Villages in New Jersey that afforded them good quarters, ready however to form an attack agst this place whenever the Ice should afford them a Bridge across Delaware. I then gave it as my opinion, this was a favorable disposition to attack them in. It seems Genl. Washington thought so too & meditated a heavy blow agst. them—such it would have proved had this plan Succeeded intirely & such has proved that part in which he did succeed. Orders were given to Genl Cadwallader (posted at Bristol with this City's associations) to Genl. Ewing with a body posted at Trenton Ferry, to cross Delaware on Christmas night when Genl. Washington himself crossed about 9 miles above Trenton with about 2400 & instantly marched them down for this place in two Divisions by different Roads. His design was to Surprise the Garrison in this place before daylight, but the weather being extremely Cold, the Ice in Delaware retarded his boats & they did not reach the Scene of action untill 8 oClock but as they were attended by a most severe No. East Storm of hail, Rain, Snow & wind, the Surprise was compleat. There was 4 Regimts of Hessians commanded by Colonel Rholl stationed here. Their advance guards made some Resistance to our advance parties & alarmed the main body time enough for about 3 or 400 & 70 Light horse that were here also to get over Trenton Bridge & make off. The remainder had drawn up, but both Divisions of our army coming on them at the same time by different Roads they Surrendered, there was 918 Prisoners that thus Surrendered with the Colours of the 4 Regimts., 6 field pieces and Considerable Bagage & stores, those that made off by way of the Bridge would have been taken by Genl. Erwing could he have Crossed at the Ferry, but the Ice made so fast & that place is so difficult when there is Ice that it was not possible as he did all that Men could do to get over, therefore some, but not the whole of the flying party did escape, many have been taken since & our Prisoners from that Expedition amounts to 1100 or 1200. Colonel Rholl died of his wounds & some other officers were Killed with about 40 privates, we did not lose a Man & had only Capn. Washington & two Privates wounded. General Cadwallader got over about 1000 men of his party but the Ice made so fast on him that he could not get over the artillery nor the Remainder of his Force & was obliged to bring back those that had Crossed. His object was to have Surprized the Posts at Mount Holly & then to have marched up the River whilst Genl. Washington marched down that they might Surround all the Troops Cantoned at Burlington, Bordentown & their Vicinity. This plan was well Laid & had not the Ice prevented would have been well Executed. Genl Washington finding those material parts frustrated & knowing the Enemy's Strength to be vastly superior to that with him at Trentown recrossed Delaware & brought off the Hessian Prisoners, field pieces, Stores &c. However he



found himself in a few Days reinforced with a good many of the Militia & determined to follow up the Blow he had struck—he crossed again to Trenton, ordered Genl Cadwallader to Cross at Bristol and directed Genl. Putnam to forward from this Place all the associators, Militia & others troops that he could muster. The Enemy were exceedingly alarmed by what had been done to Trenton & broke up their Quarters in all the parts of the Jerseys below that place, marching with precipitation back in the Country towards South Amboy, but at Cranbery they Received orders & filed off towards Brunswick. During this Time General Howe sent all the reinforcements he could from New York & whilst Genl. Washington was collecting his whole force at Trenton [the] Enemy were doing the same at Brunswick. On [. . .] the 2d Instant our Army was Colected and had Concerted some plan of operations when Intelligence was brought that the Enemies Main Body were on their March [to] attack them at Trenton. Genl. Washington [dispatched] a Brigade under Ld Stirling to amuse them & in [. . .] he drew the whole army (that Brigadier excepted) [over] the Bridge of Trenton & took post on the Heights [on] this Side the Creek that runs through that Place. [He] posted his artillery advantageously and waited the Return of Lord Stirling's Brigade, which met [the] Enemy & kept up a warm fire against them [still] retreating from about one oClock untill Sunsett [when] they entered & Marched through Trenton. The [Enemy] pushed them very hard & Killed near 100 of our [men] at the Bridge which they attempted to Cross, but [so soon] as our own people were over the Compliment was [. . .] return and equal, if not a greater slaughter, made [amongst] them. They were Broke & retired, each army then mounted their Guards within 100 yards of each other [and] a bloody battle was expected the next day. Our people possessed that part of the Town where the small number of houses stand & they had not Covering sufficient, therefore they made large fires to [keep them] Warm for the weather was severely Cold & they [very bad]ly cloathed. Genl Washington had received intelige[nce of] the Enemies numbers & found them Superior to his own. [They] consisted of regular troops, under good Discipline, well Cloathed & excellently armed, His, were chiefly Militia, badly armed, Ill provided with Cloathing & accoutrements, under no dissipline & very few of them had ever Seen a Gun fired in Anger, behold him Now [in] this most Critical situation and Consider the Conseq[uiences of] a Genl action. The only regular Troops he had with him had a right to go off because the Terms of their Inlistment expired the day before, if those departed the Militia would have been dishartened & mouldered away [to no]thing and had that happened it would be impossible ever to [get] them together again. If he gave battle or waited to be [attack]ed he could not promise himself the Least Chance of Success, being beaten his army would instantly disperse and leave this Province at the mercy of the Enemy. The Boats with [which] he Crossed



Delaware were above Trenton on the Pennsylvania Side and it was Impossible to Cross. If he [retre]ated towards Borden Town the Enemy were invited to follow & his Raw Troops would be totally dispirited, whereas at this time every man thought himself a Cæsar. Thus surrounded with difficulties and dangers attended with Consequences terrible to think of, He determined to strike a bold Stroke that might disconcert the Enemy and gain him time to place himself in a better posture. He knew there was at Prince [Town] a party of not more than 2000 men with Cloathing, [stores] & baggage, that at Brunswick was the Chief of [their] Stores & Bagage but badly guarded. He Called a [Council] of the Genl officers, told them his Situation and proposed decamping and by a forced march thro the woods round Trenton to Surprize Prince Town in the morning. This was agreed to and orders given accordingly. About 12 oClock the whole army was in Motion not knowing where they were going and a guard of about 500 Men left at the Bridge, totally ignorant of this movement (except the Commanding officers) the Fires had all been made up afresh before the march & the intire bagage of the Army sent off for Burlington so that few of [the] Soldiers took with them even their Blankets. The [Enemy] never discovered this Movement nor did our own Guards [at] the Bridge untill the morning, when our army had passed Maidenhead on their March to Princetown some Troops posted at Maidenhead saw them & dispatched advices to Princetown & preparations were made for receiving us. About a Mile & a half on this side that place the Enemy had taken post very advantageously, consisting of three Regimts of British, some broken Hessians & highlanders & a small party of Light horse, a small action ensued between them & our advanced Party, in which both sides exemplified great Bravery but the Enemy were forced to give way to Superior Numbers, with the Loss of 50 or 60 Killed, as many wounded and 140 prisoners. Our Army pushed on took possession of Prince Town with some field pieces, 100 oxen, a number of sheep, a quantity of blankets, Bagage & stores, Killed here some more of the Enemy & made more prisoners. Their whole loss on this occasion suposed to amount to about 600 in killed, wounded & prisoners. The general's original design was to Surprize Brunswick also, but his troops were totally unfit either to undertake any new Exploit or to Sustain another action for a great part of the militia had been Constantly on a March for near 36 hours during which they had never eat, drank or slept in a manner to afford them the Least refreshment.

The enemy's army at Trenton under Command of Lord Cornwallis did not miss our army for some time as our guard at the Bridge gave 'em a Canonade before they went off, but when they found Genl Washington had decamped and heard the firing towards Prince Town [they] were in the utmost Consternation & immediately made hearty March after them, Genl. Washington knew they were Coming & not being in a Condition to

face them, [took] up some Bridges to impede their March, & [struck on] the one Side of Somerset Court House, where he halted [all night.] From thence he marched to a place called Pluckamise, thence to Morris Town where he was resting and refreshing his troops the 7th Instant for I am now at the 9th and have Just recd dispatches from him. Ld Cornwallis anxious for the Safety of Brunswick pushed for that place & now Genl. Howe is Collecting all his force that was scattered in New Jersey to that point. General Washington at the same [time] will be reinforced as I Expect by Generals Heath & McDougal but [their] numbers I dont know. I think Genl Howe's [whole] force in New Jersey does not amount to more [than] 8000 men, he has lost in Killed, wounded and taken above 2000 since Christmass & our loss in atchieving this consists in Genl. Mercer dangerously wounded, Colonel Haslet & Potter killed a few other inferior off[icers], and these with all the Privates will not amount to 150 men. These Treats [feats] have turned the Scale. [The] Militia of this Place, Maryland & Jersey begin to turn out & think themselves good Soldiers but this winter Campaign is very severe on their being [. . .] and badly provided agst. the inclemency of the Season. They Know their Enemies are warmly cloathed and well provided, however they have stood it surprizingly [well]. Since the 25th the Eastern States are also turning out, [and?] seem bent on driving the Insurgents off Rhode Island, and it is also said they have a design to attack New York whilst we keep them employed in New Jersey. Thus you see the face of affairs is greatly changed since I began this Letter, but the Campaign is not yet finished. I wish it was, because Congress have now taken very spirited & effectual measures to render our Army and arms more formidable, by the extensive powers they have vested in Genl. Washington and I cannot but regret his want of Leisure to begin a Reformation that is extremely necessary. Indeed, they [have voted] him to raise & officer 16 Batons. of Infantry more than formerly ordered, also 3000 Light horses, a fine Corps of artillery & engineers &c &c. Thus whilst we have strength & are exerting [it], let France join us & she will be well seconded and suported, but if fresh importations of foreign cut throats are permitted to come over our Men will be wasted, our Finances exausted, and France lose the Glorious oportunity of assisting the opressed & of gaining the advantages of a Commerce that has [enriched] Great Brittain to a Degree that astonished [all] Europe. Measures are taking to reestablish the Credit of our Money which I doubt not will be attended with Success, but you must exert yourself to procure us timely aid in this virtuous struggle, in which we seek only to keep what belongs to us, [and] to maintain those rights which God gave, Great Britain long Confirmed but would now ingloriously rob us of.<sup>1</sup>

Tr (MH-H). A continuation of Morris to Deane, December 20, 1776.

<sup>1</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Morris to Deane, January 29, 1777.

## John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon

Dear David,

Baltimore, Jan. 8, 1777.

Three days ago I received your favour of the 20th past, with pleasure. I must tell you a trifling circumstance. When I cast my eye on the back of it, I thought it was somebody that wrote very distinctly and neatly, and did not think of you, till I saw with satisfaction your name at the bottom. There are, however, still some small inaccuracies—be ambitious of improving every day.

Just about the time I received your letter, I had given to Col. Naylor letters for Mr. Smith and Fanny<sup>1</sup> and yourself, all wrapped in a parcel for Mr. Smith. In my letter to him, of a sheet of paper, I gave a very full and particular account of our flight from Princeton, and the situation of your mother as well as myself. She is at Pequea—I hope well, but I have not heard from that place since I left her. We carried nothing away of all our effects, but what could be carried upon one team. Benjamin Hawkins drove your mother in the old chair, and I rode the sorrel mare, and made John Graham drive the four young colts. This I write least the letter should miscarry, but have not time to repeat the whole detail. In the close of that letter, I had the pleasure of writing that General Washington had gone over the river at Trenton, surprised and taken a great number of Hessians. Since that time he has been in the Jerseys, and though we have not a letter directly from himself, yet letters from Philadelphia have made us believe that on Thursday night last he deceived the enemy at Trenton, made a forced march, met Lord Howe at Stonybrook, defeated him, took about 700 prisoners, and afterwards took Princeton, and is still pursuing the enemy towards Brunswick.<sup>2</sup> If before this letter is sent off a further account comes, you shall have it. . . .<sup>3</sup>

J. Witherspoon.

MS not found; reprinted from *Christian Advocate* 2 (October 1824): 445.

<sup>1</sup> Witherspoon's letters to his son-in-law, Samuel Stanhope Smith, and his daughter, Ann, have not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 3 and 5, 1777, which were read in Congress on the 6th and 8th respectively. *JCC*, 7:14, 18.

<sup>3</sup> Ellipsis in Tr.

## Samuel Adams to John Adams

My dear Sir

Baltimore Jany 9 1777

I have every Day for a Month past been anxiously expecting the Pleasure of seeing you here, but now begin to suspect you do not intend to give us your Assistance in Person. I shall therefore do all that lies in my Power to engage your epistolary Aid. You will by every Opportunity receive my



Letters, and, I dare say, you will be so civil to me as to answer at least some of them.

I have given our Friend Warren, in one of my Letters to him, the best Reason I could for the sudden Removal of Congress to this Place.<sup>1</sup> Possibly he may have communicated it to you. I confess it was not agreeable to my Mind; but I have since altered my Opinion, because we have done more important Business in three Weeks than we had done, and I believe, should have done, at Philadelphia, in six Months. As you are a Member of Congress, you have a Right to know all that has been done; but I dare not commit it to Paper, at a Time when the safe Carriage of Letters is become so precarious. One thing I am very solicitous to inform you, because I know it will give you great Satisfaction. If you recollect our Conversation at New Haven, I fancy you will understand me, when I tell you, that to *one Place* we have added four, and increased the Number of Persons from *three* to six.<sup>2</sup> I hate this dark mysterious Manner of writing, but Necessity requires it.

You have heard of the Captivity of General Lee. Congress have directed Genl Washington to offer six Hessian Field officers in Exchange for him. It is suspected that the Enemy chuse to consider him as a Deserter, bring him to Tryal in a Court Martial & take his Life. Assurances are orderd to be given to General Howe, that five of those officers together with Lt Colo Campbel will be detain'd, and all of them receive the same Measure that shall be meted to him. This Resolution will most certainly be executed.

We have this Day pass'd a Recommendation to the Council of Massachusetts Bay of a very important Nature. It will be sent by this Express to the Council, to whom I refer you for a Perusal of it.<sup>3</sup>

Our Affairs in France and Spain wear a promising Aspect, and we have taken Measures to put them on a respectable Footing in other Parts of Europe; & I flatter myself too much if we do not succeed.

The Progress of the Enemy thro' the Jerseys has chagrind me beyond Measure, but I think we shall reap the Advantage in the End. We have already beat a Part of their Army at Trenton, and the inclosd Paper will give you a farther Account which we credit, though not yet authenticated. The late Behavior of the People of Jersey was owing to some of their leading Men, who instead of directing & animating, most shamefully deserted them. When they found a Leader in the brave Colo Ford, they followd him with Alacrity. They have been treated with savage Barbarity by the Hessians, but, I believe, more so by Britains. After they have been most inhumanly used in their Persons, without Regard to Sex or Age, and plundered of all they had without the least Compensation, Lord Howe and his Brother (now Sir William Knight of the Bath) have condescended to offer them Protections for the free Enjoyment of their Effects.



You have seen the Power with which General Washington is vested for a limited Time. Congress is very attentive to the Northern Army, and Care is taking effectually to supply it with every thing necessary this Winter for the next Campaign. General Gates is here. How shall we make him the Head of that Army?

We are about establishing Boards of War, Ordnance, Navy and Treasury, with a Chamber of Commerce; each of them to consist of Gentlemen who are not Members of Congress. By these Means I hope our Business will be done more systematically, speedily, & effectually.<sup>4</sup>

Great and heavy Complaints have been made of Abuse in the Director Generals Department in both our Armies. Some, I suppose, without Grounds, others with too much Reason. I have no Doubt but as soon as a Committee reports, which is expected this Day, both Morgan and Stringer will be removed, as I think they ought.

To the Eighty Eight Battalions ordered to be raised, Sixteen are to be added, which with Six to be raised out of the Continent at large will make one hundred & ten, besides three thousand horse, three Regiments of Artillery and a Company of Engineers. We may expect fifty or sixty thousand of the Enemy in June next. Their Design will still be to subdue the obstinate States of New England. It was the Intention that Carleton should winter in Albany, Howe in New York and Clinton at Rhode Island, that with Reinforcements in the Spring, they might be ready to attack New England on all sides. I hope every possible Method will be used to quicken the new Levies, and that the Fortifications in the Harbour of Boston will be in complete readiness. Much will depend upon our Diligence this Winter.

The Attention of Congress is also turned to the Southward. Forts Pitt and Randolph are to be garrisoned, and Provisions laid up for 2000 Men, Six Months. By the last Accounts from South Carolina we are informed, that late Arrivals have supplied them with every thing necessary for their Defence.

I have written in great Haste, and have Time only to add that I am, with sincere Regards to your Lady and Family, very cordially, Your Friend,

Samuel Adams

P.S. Dr Morgan and Dr Stringer are dismissed without any Reason assigned which Congress could of Right do, as they held their Places during Pleasure. The true Reason, as I take it, was the general Disgust and the Danger of the Loss of an army arising therefrom.

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Samuel Adams to James Warren, December 25, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps a reference to the decision of Congress to send commissioners to Vienna, Spain, Prussia, and Tuscany in addition to France, thus requiring three additional commissioners. *JCC*, 6:1054.

<sup>3</sup> Probably the January 8 resolution authorizing Massachusetts to send an army at the expense of Congress to capture Nova Scotia. *JCC*, 7:20-21. See also El-

bridge Gerry to John Adams, January 8, 1777, note 3; and John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council, January 10, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> Edmund C. Burnett succinctly reviewed the development of executive departments in the following summary. "A committee of five was appointed Dec. 26, 1776, 'to prepare a plan for the better conducting the executive business of Congress, by boards composed of persons, not members of Congress'. On Jan. 9 two members were added to the committee, which is usually denominated the committee on departments. The first outcome of the committee efforts was the organization, Mar. 22, of the office of Secretary of Congress. On Apr. 8 the committee reported a plan for a board of war and ordnance (the report is in the *Journals*, under that date), but the consideration of it was postponed, and on April 12 it was recommitted. On June 6 the committee was instructed to 'proceed on the business committed to them, and make the report as soon as possible'. On July 18 it was resolved to appoint a board of war, consisting of three gentlemen, not members of Congress, but to conduct the business under the direction of the existing board composed of members. The appointment of this board was set for July 22, was then postponed, and the next action recorded is the consideration, Oct. 16, of a report from the committee on departments. The plan was adopted, after amendment, Oct. 17, and on Nov. 7 the members of the board were appointed. They were Thomas Mifflin, Timothy Pickering, and R. H. Harrison. Mifflin and Pickering accepted (see the *Journals*, Nov. 18, 21) and Harrison declined (*ibid.*, Nov. 21). Upon the recommendation of the member board Nov. 24 (see the *Journals* of that day, also Nov. 21, 22) it was resolved to appoint two additional members, and on Nov. 27 General Gates, Richard Peters, and Joseph Trumbull were chosen, with Gates as president (see no. 700, note 4, *post*). A reduction in the membership to two members of Congress and three commissioners not members of Congress was made Oct. 29, 1778 (see also the *Journals*, Apr. 21, 1778), but otherwise, though with numerous changes of personnel, the board remained thus constituted until 1781. Feb. 7, 1781, Congress established the departments of finance, war, and marine. The post of Secretary at War was filled Oct. 30, 1781, by the appointment of Benjamin Lincoln, who accepted Nov. 26.

"The first steps of importance toward a reconstitution of the treasury were taken Apr. 15, 1778, when a plan was brought in proposing a board of five members not of Congress. On Aug. 13 there was a report by a committee upon this report, and Sept. 26 an 'arrangement' of the treasury was adopted, leaving the board however still composed of members of Congress. In April, 1779 (see the *Journals*, Apr. 13, 22, 27), further modifications were proposed, and July 30 an ordinance was passed establishing a board of treasury consisting of three persons not members of Congress and two members. The department remained thus constituted until February, 1781 (see above), when Robert Morris was appointed Superintendent of Finance (Feb. 20). The first steps toward shifting the administration of the navy to others than members of Congress were the appointment in November, 1776, of a board of naval experts in Philadelphia, and in April, 1777, of a similar board for the Eastern states, both to be under the direction of the marine committee. Two and a half years later, Oct. 28, 1779, a board of admiralty was created, consisting of three persons not members of Congress and two members. Upon the reorganization of the department, Feb. 7, 1781, Gen. Alexander McDougall was chosen Secretary of Marine (Feb. 27), but he declined, and the office was never filled.

"Apparently the only outcome of the project of establishing a 'Chamber of Commerce' was the creation, July 5, 1777, of a committee of commerce to supersede the secret committee. This committee, with somewhat enlarged powers, was reconstituted Dec. 14, 1778." Burnett, *Letters*, 2:210-11. See also William Hooper to Robert Morris, December 28, 1776, note 5.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris

Gentlemen

Baltimore 9th January 1777

Captain Hammond having been detained longer than we expected, furnishes us with an opportunity of giving you the information we have since our last received from the Army, thro a Committee of Congress left at Philadelphia; for we have yet had no regular accounts from General Washington.

On the 2d instant, General Washington having received information that the enemy were on their march to attack him at Trenton, ordered two brigades of militia to advance and annoy them on the road leading from Princeton to Trenton, who falling in with the enemy about 3 miles from the latter place, engaged them, but being overpower'd by numbers, made a retreating fight until they joined the main body who were drawn up on the heights west of a bridge that divides the village of Trenton nearly in two parts. The enemy attempting to force the bridge were repulsed with loss by a body of men with artillery placed there to receive them. In the mean time some batteries being opened on the heights soon drove the enemy from that part of the Town possessed by them. Thus the affair ended for that evening. But General Washington having received intelligence that Gen. Howe was in person coming up to join his army with a strong reenforcement, directing fires to be made on the heights to deceive the enemy, decampt at midnight and made a forced march in order to meet Mr. Howe and give him battle before he joined his main body. About 3 miles short of Prince Town, the van of our army fell in with 600 British Infantry strongly posted behind a fence, and upon a hill, with artillery. They were attacked, & after a smart engagement, routed, having lost 280 killed and taken prisoners; among whom, one Colonel, one Major, several Captains and subalterns were slain, and about 20 Officers made prisoner. The fugitives were pursued thro Princeton where our Army halted a while. In this affair 6 pieces of artillery with abundance of baggage fell into our hands. At Princeton, it was learnt that Gen. Howe was not with this party, but that he remained at Brunswick with 3 or 4 thousand men. There being a considerable force in the rear, and our Men greatly fatigued with their march, and their baggage chiefly behind (it having been sent to Burlington) the General proceeded to Somerset Court house that evening, a little to the Westward of the road leading to Brunswick, and about 7 or 9 miles from that place. Here we understand he expected to be joined by a body of 1500 or 2000 fresh troops, and that his intention was to attack Mr. Howe in Brunswick. On Friday morning, when the enemy at Trenton missed our army, they returned towards Princeton, but it seems, they left 3000 Hessians behind them, who following afterwards, were so fatigued with travel, and want



of food, that numbers were left on the road, and were straggling about the country in threes and fours. Many were taken by the Country people and brought in prisoners, many came to Trenton and surrendered themselves. The militia of Jersey are rising generally, and it was thought few of these Hessians would get back again. This is the present state of our information, and we hourly expect a well authenticated account of the whole, and of much greater successes. We shall endeavor to give you the speediest account of what shall further come to our knowledge from good authority. The above relation is taken from a Gentleman who was in the action, and who the Committee write us, is a person of sense and honor. The General has been too much engaged to write, & we suppose waits the final issue.

We most earnestly wish you success in your negotiation, and are with perfect esteem, honorable Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble servants,

Benja Harrison

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. In the engagement near Princeton we lost 15 privates, one Colonel, and Brigadier Gen Mercer, a very good officer & a worthy Gentleman.

In secret Committee.

RC (PPAmP). Written by Lee and signed by Lee and Harrison. Tr (CtY). A copy in a clerical hand, endorsed by Benjamin Franklin: "Passy, Mar. 21. 1777. The above is a Copy of the Committee's last Letter. The preceding give an Acct. of the taking Prisoners 3 Battalions of Hessians at Trenton Dec. 26, of which I suppose you have already seen the particulars. B.F."

## Executive Committee to William Alexander

Dear sir

Jan'y 9th 1777

We received your Lordships letter of last night<sup>1</sup> and have communicated the Contents to General Ewing who commands here at this time, also to the council of Safety,<sup>2</sup> and altho it seems to be our unanimous opinion that General Howe will not play such a desperate game as to push for this place under present circumstances, still it may be most prudent to act as if that were his design. Genl. Ewing will therefore give immediate orders to All the Troops that are in this city to march for Bristol from whence the Commanding officer will be directed to correspond with your Lordship, also with Genl. Washington & Genl. Putnam &c, and as more Troops come in they will be Sent forward. Here is the 9th Virginia Regiment commanded by Colo. Fleming and the Pennsylvania Regt. commanded by Colonel Cook; the rest are Militia, altogether about 1400, as Genl. Ewing imagines. We shall be happy to hear that a Speedy recovery may enable you to take the Command of this Force to which every



addition shall be made that is possible. The Commissary will be ordered to forward Provision and Ammunition, but Cloathing and other Necessaries are so wasted and destroyed by Militia that all the Magazines of Europe would hardly keep them supplied. They have nearly exhausted those of Pennsylvania, and we fear the next Campaign will feel Severely the woefull consequences of those frequent calls of Militia into the Feild. Manufacturers, artificers and Plowmen Should stay at home to provide for better soldiers. Its to be hoped we shall profit by experience and grow more wise. We send by this conveyance 100,000 dollars to Mr Palfrey and almost ruin ourselves to Supply his immediate wants, but suppose there is more on the way from Congress. With great regard and esteem, We are yr Ld Ships, hble Serts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> Two letters of January 8 from Gen. William Alexander to the Executive Committee are in *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:173–75.

<sup>2</sup> This day the Executive Committee sent the following letter, written by Robert Morris and signed by Morris and George Clymer, to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety: "We have just recd some Interesting intelligence from Genl Ld Stirling & wish to see one or Two of your members here that we may Communicate the same & Confer on the Subject." Robert Morris Papers, DLC.

## Executive Committee to William Palfrey

Sir

Jan'y 9th 1777

We have your letter of yesterday which with that from Mr Huntingdon shall be forwarded to Congress immediately and to reli[e]ve your present necessities as far as in our power, we send You by this Conveyance One hundred Thousand dollars escorted by a party of the Kent County Light Horse.

This sum drains our Purse nearly to the Bottom but we expect it will soon be replenished from Baltimore and are happy in every opportunity of promoting the service. You'l please to acknowledge the Receipt of this money to sir, Your Obedt serts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir,

Philadelphia January 9. 1777

We do ourselves the Honor to transmit you the inclosed Report or Relation of Joseph Traversie<sup>1</sup> a Canadian by which your Excellency will

learn the secret Machinations of some of his Countrymen of Rank who are Prisoners in this State. It is from an Apprehension of what is there intimated that a Release of these Prisoners is about to take Place, that we early make you acquainted with this Circumstance respecting their Conduct, and your Excellency will best judge how far they ought to be indulged with a Favour of this kind while they labour under such Suspicions.

Upon Enquiry we learn that Traversie has always manifested a warm attachment to the American Cause and we suggest to you as a Matter that has occurred to Ourselves whether it would not be proper to suffer this Man to return to Canada in order to give Information concerning the Design mention'd in the Report as the best Means of defeating its Execution. Our Information concerning Traversie is through Mr. Bondfield late of Quebec, who tells Us he will undertake this Service and lives near St. Francis.

We are, Your Excellency's obedt. huml Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DLC). Written by Clymer and signed by Clymer, Morris, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> This document, dated January 8, is in Washington Papers, DLC. For Washington's reaction to it, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:503.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Jan'y 9th. 1777

We have just received the dispatches from Congress delivered herewith to Colo. Hartley, & having received Copies of the Resolves of Congress therein enclosed to you, we cannot help saying they have been liberal in their offers to regain Genl Lee, and altho we have not only a high opinion of his merit & abilities as an Officer but also a personal regard for him, yet we are apt to think we shou'd have opposed these offers had we been in Congress, at least some of us are of that opinion. However this is not to the purpose at present. We observe that Congress direct you to propose an agreement whereby prisoners may be supplied with provisions at the Expence or upon the Credit of the States. We recommended to Congress to appoint an Agent of their own to attend the Prisoners & see justice done them and to prevent their enlisting with the Enemy & if this is not done the plan will be incomplete, as we are inclined to believe our People suffer by the peculation of the Commissarys that have the care of them, & not by the allowance ordered by the Commander in Chief. We think such an agent might be admitted on each side, under parole not to give intelli-

gence. We suppose the Report about Mr Stockton to be totally false but your Excellency will no doubt know that matter perfectly. As you will have Occasion to send in a Flag to Genl Howe we beg leave to suggest the propriety of writing to Lord Howe respecting the Ill usage our prisoners suffer onboard the Prison Ships in New York and particularly we cou'd wish his Lordship to be informed that the Officers & Seamen taken onboard British Merchant Ships have not been considered as prisoners of War in this place, but have always been left at liberty to dispose of themselves as they thought proper without restraint, and have very generally got passages to different parts of Europe. On the Contrary we find such of our People as are taken onboard Merchant Vessells are either made to work onboard the Men of War or detained onboard the prison Ships under intollerable Ill usage & no distinction between Master, Mates, Foremast Men & Negroes which surely is an unnecessary cruelty on Men who are taken from an innocent pursuit of a Maintainance in that line in which they were bred. We dont know how they Treat their Captives out of Merchant Ships carried into the Eastern States, but imagine the same conduct is observed as here & unless Ld Howe will do the same by ours, it is time to retaliate by forcing some to work onboard our ships of War & committing others to Goal or putting them onboard Prison Ships &c. There are now two very honest Masters that sail out of this port, detained onboard the Whitby Prison Ship, Capt Thos. Bell, & Capt Jacob Getshius. If his Lordship will not release them on the principles proposed, Mr. Morris will engage to send two British Masters for them if sent here on parole and will be much obliged to your Excellency to propose it. Bell has been very useful heretofore & shou'd not be left to suffer, therefore we hope you will excuse us for troubling you with these matters.<sup>1</sup>

The Movements of both armies in New Jersey are again become very interesting & we wait impatiently for further Authentic intelligence. In Consequence of letters from Genl Stephen & Ld Stirling we have requested Genl Ewing to send forward all the Force now here & what may come in, up to Bristol & Trenton Ferry to guard the passage of the River shou'd it be attempted by the Enemy & that the Commanding Officer shou'd give you Constant intelligence of his Strength.

For the Committee of Congress I am your Excellencys obt Servt,  
Robt Morris

P.S. Your dispatches of the 7th are just come in.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Byers is here & shall be set to work immediately.

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Washington proposed an exchange for Bell and Getshius in a January 13 letter to Sir William Howe. Several days before this, however, Bell had escaped from British captivity. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:5, 23.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, 6:474, 477-78.

## Executive Committee to James Wilson

Sir

Jany 9th 1777

In consequence of the late resolution of Congress to erect a Magazine at Carlisle<sup>1</sup> we have applied to Mr Nicholas Hicks, a Bricklayer of the first reputation here, to Superintend the work. It is yet much too early in the Year to begin it, but we have thought it expedient to forward him to prepare the necessary Materials, and engage the proper workmen in which agreeable to your offer, you will no doubt give him all the Assistance in your power.

Congress having fixed on one large Building to Store their ammunition at Carlisle, we had some intention of Suggesting to them our own thoughts on this matter which are that it would be Safer both on account of Fire [*or*] a Sudden Surprize of an Enemy to lodge the ammunition in two or more smaller buildings detached from each other at suitable distances, but whatever alteration this opinion of ours might induce Congress to make in their resolution, Mr Hicks present business may go on without interruption.

We are sir, Your most obedt serts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 6:1044.

## John Hancock to Certain States

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Jany 9th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves I am commanded by Congress to transmit to you, and to request your Attention to them. From their great Importance to the Army, they will naturally claim your best Endeavours to carry them into Execution, without any particular Recommendation or Comment.<sup>1</sup> I have only Time to add, that I have the Honour to be, your most obedt. & very hble Servant,<sup>2</sup>

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "1. Assembly of Maryland. 2. Assembly of Virginia. 3. Assembly of South Carolina. 4. Convention of North Carolina. 5. Convention of Georgia."

<sup>1</sup> These resolves concerned the purchase of beef and pork by the states to whom this letter was addressed and were passed this day in response to a December 30, 1776, letter from the Executive Committee. *JCC*, 7:11, 26-27.

<sup>2</sup> The RC's of this letter apparently contained a postscript consisting of the circular letter Hancock wrote to all the states on January 10, printed below. See, for instance, those to the Maryland Assembly, Red Books, MdAA; and to the North Carolina Convention, *N.C. State Records*, 11:361.



## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

Dear Sir,

Baltimore 9th January 1777

I have no doubt but that Mr. President inclosed you with his last dispatches the printed account of General Washingtons success at Trenton. The number of Hessian prisoners there made, do not fall much short of 1100. Since that event we have had no regular account from the army, but from a Committee of Congress at Philadelphia we have the accounts brought into Philadelphia by a number of persons and believed there, in substance as follows. The British forces stationed at Brunswick, Trenton, and other places in New Jersey, hearing of the success at Trenton, collected and marched towards that place to attack our army, now strengthened by the junction of all its detachments and by several corps of Militia. Gen. Washington ordered two Brigades to advance on the Princeton road and interrupt the enemies march. About 3 miles from Trenton they met the enemy and being attacked by a much superior force, were compelled to retreat, which they did slowly keeping up a retreating engagement until they joined the main body drawn up on the heigh grounds on this side a bridge that divides the village of Trenton nearly in two parts. The enemy attempting to force the bridge were received by Gen. Mifflin with the Philadelphia militia and a number of Field pieces, who drove them back with great loss, and some batteries being now opened on the heights commanding the enemies part of the Town, they were soon obliged to quit it with loss. The armies still continued posted opposite each other until midnight, when Gen. Washington (having received certain intelligence that Gen. Howe was on his march in person, with a large reinforcement to join his army) having previously directed large fires to be made to deceive the enemy, decampt, made a fort march that night to meet Gen. Howe, met with him at a place called Quakers bridge, gave him battle and routed his troops, taking from 6 to 800 prisoners. Pursuing the fugitives he entered Princeton where a number of Officers, 6 or 7 field pieces, and the 40th Regiment were taken. The British army that remained at Trenton knew nothing of General Washingtons design until they heard the firing next morning, and then, having possessed themselves of the heights for some time, they retreated towards Brunswick along the Pennytown road, a circuitous, western way, leaving the place of engagement on the right hand a good distance. This extraordinary motion denotes panic, because their direct rout to the scene of action was along the road to Princetown, as thus <sup>1</sup>

The account goes on—That our Army was pursuing from Princeton to Brunswick, where the enemy had large Stores kept. We know that Gen. Heath with above 3000 men is about Hackingsack and Colo. Ford with 1500 Jersey militia is before him in the way to Trenton. This is the posture we understand things to be in, and we wait in hourly expectation of receiving authentic intelligence of the total rout of the enemies army in

Jersey and their disgraceful evacuation of that State. Thus we bid fair to derive great advantage from what we once apprehended would injure us extremely, the dispersion of our army. The enemy knowing we had no army, and trusting to their Tory intelligence that no forces could be collected, had divided their troops in such a manner as to expose them to ruin from Militia only, or chiefly so; for excepting about 1500 Eastern troops, the same number of Virginians, about 200 of Smallwoods Marylanders and a broken Pennsylvania regiment, the rest of Gen. Washington's army is Militia. Another valuable consequence will result from this success, it will prove to our enemies that America, without an army, is formidable in its militia. For sudden exertions, the Militia certainly do well, but they cannot bear the continued discipline of camps and campaigns. This certainty makes it of the last importance that our regular Army should be assembled with all possible dispatch, and such you will find to be the sense of Congress by their requests to the several States for this purpose. Our wicked Enemy to Freedom & all its friends, are actually preparing to try Gen. Lee by a special Court Martial. For it seems, that in order to be aided by a court martial that Gentlemen's resignation of his commission was not accepted. We have sent to remonstrate with Mr. Howe on this subject, to demand Gen. Lee's enlargement on his parole, and to assure that the same infliction exactly that is applied to Gen. Lee, shall directly be applied to 5 Hessian Field officers and Colo. Campbell their favorite Engineer who shall be reserved for that special purpose. We have offered 6 Hessian field Officers in exchange for Gen. Lee.

I heartily wish you the compliments of the season, and am with great esteem dear Sir your most affectionate and obedient servant,

Richard Henry Lee

[P.S.] Be pleased to let the scheme of lottery be published in our papers that people may be prepared against the Tickets are sent.

RC (Vi). William Wirt Henry, *Patrick Henry, Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), 3:36-39. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> At this point Lee drew a diagram of the Trenton-Brunswick area, showing Washington's line of march and the British army's retreat. See *ibid.*, p. 38.

## Robert Morris to Nicholas Cooke

Sir.

Philadelphia January 9th 1777.

I have the honor to transmit you herewith a letter from the Honb Mr Ellery who desires me to give you an account of the battle of the 3<sup>d</sup> inst. which he supposes to have been fought at Trenton.<sup>1</sup> Common fame had been too busy and magnified the transactions of that day by private in-

telligence to Baltimore far beyond the reality. I take it for granted Mr Ellery has given you the situation of the 2 armies on Thursday evening the 2d instant as I transmitted to Congress an exact account thereof. That night Genl Washington (not choosing to risk a general action the next morning) decamped with his whole army except a guard of 500 men so privately that even that guard did not miss him, and by a forced march in the night he got between Trenton and Princeton leaving the main body of the ennemis army waiting at the former place, in the expectation of attacking him there, for they had taken post within cannon shot and placed their out guards at each end of Trenton Bridge within 100 yards of each other. In the morning our guard were astonished to find their commanders gone. The comr of the Guard cannonaded the enemy awhile to amuse them and then followed the baggage of our army which he brought to Burlington. When the ennemie found the Americans gone and heard a firing between them and Princeton they were in the utmost consternation, got under arms, took possession of the heights expecting to be attacked and waited untill they were undecieved, when they marched fast as they could for Princeton. The firing they heard was an engagement between three regiments of British, some broken Hessians and Highlanders and our advance party within a mile and a half of Princeton in which this small body of the enemy behaved very well but were soon routed with the loss of about 50 or 60 killed and abt 100 taken prisoners. Our people pushed on to Princeton where they killed and took a number more with some field pieces, blankets, baggage, cattle, sheep and stores.

The Genls original design was to have surprized Brunswick also but his troops were quite exhausted with hunger, thirst and fatigue; many of them had not slept, eat or drank for 36 hours, numbers of them were almost naked and in short they were not in a condition to undertake any new exploit or to wait an attack from an enemy superior in number. Less fatigued and better provided the Genl therefore quitted Princeton, took up some bridges to impede the enemy and went aside to Somerset Court house where they rested that night. He is since got to Morris town where I hope he is greatly reinforced by Genls Heath and McDougal. Genl Howe is collecting his forces together and their armies are again become very interesting. The enemies loss at Princeton was not less than 600. At Trenton on the 26th 918, and at various times consequent of the action of the 26 inst—300. Since the action of Princeton several more parties and stragglers have been brought in by Militia so that upon the whole their loss in killed, wounded and prisoners must be considerably more than 2000 In N Jersey and I hope to hear soon of further success. My time being much taken up in public business you will excuse me for not being more particular and I have the honor to be, Sir, Your honor's most obedient servant,

Robert Morris.

Tr (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> See William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke, January 7, 1777, note 3.



## Thomas Nelson to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore Jan'y 9th 1777

The Board of Treasury have had under their consideration Mr Jewells & Mr Biddles Accounts, and find a Balance due to the former of 1283 17/90 Dollars and to the latter of 333 30/90, which they desire you will be so kind as to pay those Gentlemen.<sup>1</sup>

We are extremely impatient for the Express that you have promis'd us, for altho we have the greatest reason to hope that things are going on favourably, yet our anxious minds cannot be at ease, while they are in this suspensive state. It was reported here last night, that General Washington had, after defeating Howe, return'd from Princeton to meet Cornwallis upon the Penny Town Road; but we have the most fertile genius's in this Town, that ever I met with—every day furnishes something new. My faith is founded upon the Generals & your Letters. Untill I see them I shall believe nothing. The Treasurer will send Mr [Smith] Loan office certificates to the amount of 270,000 Dollars this day; the rest shall follow as soon as they can be prepar'd.

I am with the greatest sincerity, Your Obedt Servt & friend,  
Thos Nelson jr.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:22–23.

## George Walton to George Washington

Sir,

Philadelphia, 9th January, 1777

As a general Cartelle between your Excellency in behalf of the united states, and the Commanders of the British army and navy has been settled, I take the liberty of enclosing to your Excellency a list of the names of the Officers and men of an armed Boat which were taken in May last by Captain Stanhope, of the Raven, while in the service of the state I have the honor to represent; and I have this day received information that they are now confined in a prison-ship in the harbor of New-York.

The fortune of war having placed several officers and privates both of the British Fleet and army in the power of your officers in Georgia, I was informed that an Exchange was proposed to Captain Stanhope before he brought our people away; and that he declined it, alledging that he had no orders to that purpose. As these men have been a long time in a most disagreeable and painful confinement, and several of them having families, I must earnestly request that your Excellency will either demand Captain Brown and his men in exchange for any prisoners which have been delivered to the enemy, or that you will apply for their release upon an assurance that an equal number of Officers and men, which are now in



Georgia, shall be given up to the Commanding Officer at Augustine, or to any other Officer that may be empowered to receive them.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be, Sir, with the most perfect esteem, Your Excellency's very humble Servant,  
Geo Walton

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup>For Washington's response to this request, see his January 12 letter to the Executive Committee and his January 13 letter to Lord Howe, Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:504, 7:5.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

Baltimore 9th Jany 1777

I have not receiv'd a line from you since my arrival at Philadelphia which was on the 24th Octor last, since which the Fortunes of our army have been various, accounts of which have undoubtedly long ago reached you. The Sourse of all the evils that have happen'd us is the short inlistments, it was owing to this cause that the Enemy made such advances in New Jersey. They being well inform'd of the scituation of our army took the advantage when the time of Inlistments expir'd & oblig'd Genl. Washington with a handful of men to retreat over the Delaware they keeping possession of Trenton which is about 30 Miles from Philad. The Enemy also sent a Party of about 1000 Men to Burlington about 17 miles from Philad. & had possess'd themselves of all the Towns & Villages in Jersey from Hackinsack to Burlington committing the most Horrid ravages wherever they passed. All this did not move the People to turn out to stop these destroyers of their Country. In short it was generally thot that they woud get possession of Philad., many in that City being ready to receive & it's probable invited them. In this Scituation it was thot most prudent for Congress to adjourn to this place where I arriv'd the 17th Decr. Since I left Philad. several Regiments from Ticonderoga & from the Eastern side of Hudsons River have join'd Genl. Washington, a considerable number of Melitia & Southern troops have also join'd him & on the night of the 25th he cross'd the Delaware above Trenton & surpris'd a Body of Hessians in that town most of which he Brot off as You'll see by his Letter which I suppose will be in all the Papers before this reaches you. Since this enterprise he has had several skirmishes in which he has been Victorious. By the last accots. he was on his march from Princetown to Brunswick & if he does not suffer the Enemy to out General him I am in no doubt he will utterly destroy Howe's army. This will be, in that case, a glorious begining for the Year 1777. However the Fortune of war is uncertain, Victory may again change sides, be that as it may, I am always prepared for the worst, being ready at the same time to meet the smiles of fortune.

You have no doubt heard of Genl. Lee's being taken. By the Proceedings of the Enemy with him he is to be try'd as a deserter having in time past held a Commission under the Tyrant of Britain. Congress have directed that six Field officers in our Possession shod be offered in exchange for him, & have inform'd Howe that whatever treatment Lee receives shall be exactly observ'd towards them. If Poor Lee shod be Hang'd, the Law of Retaliation will most assuredly be executed in turn, they are accordingly order'd to be closely confined. Every accot. from abroad are as favourable as we could wish. The British Tyrant is using every art with all the Courts in Europe to gain them to his Interest but his schemes have hitherto been unsuccessful especially with the only two that can be serviceable to us viz France & Spain. Among other things his tools have Confidently asserted at the Court of France that an accommodation was made between him & America which our Commissioners at that Court have possitive orders to contradict. I can't conceive the Reason that I have no Letters. The last I Receiv'd was under the 25th or 27th Novr. Has every body in New Hamr forgot me or what can it mean I am a greater stranger to whats doing there than I am to whats doing in Georgia. I shod impute it to some obstruction in the Post office were it not that the Gentn from Massachusetts have letters every week. I suppose You are now retir'd to winter Quarters; pray let me know how your Plantation goes on; what do you think of a few Hessions next summer as settlers? Those that have been taken are exceedingly Pleas'd with Captivity & I believe wod Gladly settle in the Country. I suppose we have now from 1500 to 2000 of them & hope by the time this reaches you, You'll hear of as many British, in the same scituation. If Mr. Howe meets with the treatment that I expect he will in New Jersey He'll be oblig'd to call his Troops from Rhoad Island. I have wrote a long letter but what it contains I don't know nor have I time to look over it, it being almost one o'clock & the Express who carries it goes off early in the Morn, must therefore wish a good night & Happy New Year. Your very affect Bror,

W W

[P.S.] My Best Regards to Your Circle.

RC (MH-H).

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Jany 10th 1777

You have herewith a letter from his Excellency Genl. Washington which is the latest Account we have from that quarter. We have not understood before that Genl. Mercer is a prisoner and immagine there is some mistake in that matter, because Dr. Potts visited him after the Enemy had passed

through Prince Town. Therefore if he is now prisoner they must have sent back a party to make him So. You have also a letter herein from Mr Palfrey and another from Mr Huntingdon expressing their great want of Money, in consequence of which we have got back the 50,000 Dollars which we lent to the Council on Safety, drawn on the Loan Officer for 50,000 more and this morning have dispatched a waggon under the Exhort of Captain John Chew and his Company of Kent County light Horse with 100,000 Dollars to Mr Palfrey at Newton. Thus you will see our fund is nearly exhausted as the loan Officer has no Certificates by him. Several Captains appointed by the State of New Jersey to recruit Companies to serve during the war meet with Success but want money, the confusion in that Country prevents their being regularly supplied and as that service of all others Should be most promoted, we have and shall supply those that produce proper Credentials, which we hope will be approved of. You will please to receive also enclosed herewith two Letters from Ld Stirling, and One from General Stephen. Upon the receipt of these Yesterday, we communicated them to Genl Ewing and the Council of Safety, requesting the General to Send Colo. De Haws with all the troops now in the City to Bristol and Canton them from thence along the River, to order the Commissarys of Stores & of Provisions to send forward Sufficient supplies and to direct the Commanding officer to correspond constantly with Genl Washington and the other Generals that have Seperate Commands informing them of his Strength, that they may order him to March on if the Enemy do not look this way. As fast as the other Troops come here they shall be sent forward, but there begins to be a great want of Muskets, Cloathing, Accoutrements and all sorts of Necessarys. All the troops that pass through this place are in totall want of every Article, and altho we have aimed at keeping Blankets, the best Muskets and Cloathing for the new Recruits these things are delivered out either by Orders of Commanding Officers, Council of Safety or one Authority or another. Pray Heaven that American States may never more be obliged to call Militia to the Field. It is the most ruinous, destructive, expensive way of supporting a war that human invention can devise.

Our River is full of floating Ice here & must be fast above, so that Genl. Howe has a Bridge Ready if he chuses to March this and there is but little to stop his progress.

We cannot conceive however that he will make so rash an attempt in the present state of things for altho we admit he may with great ease get here, yet we don't know how he could Support his Army nor See any chance of their ever getting back again. Nothing can Support an Apprehension of their coming but the experience we have had of their rashness and folly in Other Movements. As fast as we receive intelligence it shall be communicated to Congress. We have agreed with a person to Superintend the Building of a Magazine at Carlisle, he is to go up there next week to seek for proper stores, employ persons to quarry it, and fix on the



best Seat for it. We shall address him to Mr Wilson whom we hear is gone thither, but on this Subject we beg leave to Suggest to Congress that it might be much safer, both on Account of Accident and Enemies to have two Magazines for Powder of half the Size of that ordered, one at Carlisle and the other at Reading, the expence not much encreased thereby. We have sent Capt. Isaac Coran who has been the director of the Elaboratory for twelve Months past to bring the Men that have worked under him from Fish Kill hither that they proceed to establish the Elaboratory Congress have directed, and desired him to wait on Genl. Washington in his way for Such instructions as he might think proper to give. We mentioned sometime ago the waste and destruction that were going forward in the Continental stables here.<sup>1</sup> The more we enquire into that Matter the more ruinous we find it, and the business is now in Such a state of Confusion that we hardly know how to remedy it. Our Opinion is that no Such thing as a Continental stable should ever have existed. General Mifflin when he proposed it and established it we well know meant to Save mony, but the experiment will prove destructive to the last degree. The Horses after being worked to the Bone, become neglected because it is nobodys business to take care of them, the Feed is stolen, wasted and destroyed, because nobody can tell who is intitled to it, and who is not, every Officer in the service Crams his Horses into the Public Stables and calls him Continental, every Team that is hired and ought to find their own feed, say they are Continental and demand it as a right from the Public. Mr Hiltzhimier does all he can to prevent waste, imposition and abuses, but they threaten his life and to burn his Stables. We sent him a Gaurd and they were as bad as the waggoners. Enclosed you have a Copy of the return he has made and of his note to us. In short if the Present Campaign was closed we should think it would be best to sell all the Continental Horses and waggons, shut up the Stables and encourage private people to provide the public with them on hire by good prices, for then the Horses would be taken care of and the feed not be wasted. and these are now very material objects. We are sir, Your Obedt serts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> See Robert Morris to Hancock, December 16, 1776, note 5.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 10th. 1777

The enclosed four drafts of Rd Caswell Esqr. Treasurer of No Carolina on the Continental Treasurer have been presented to us for payment, but as we Conceive they shou'd first meet the approbation of Congress, they are sent for that purpose. The holder of them desires to receive the money here & if you direct it they shall be paid out of our Funds, he seems



very impatient for his money & hopes the bills will be returned for payment immediately. The 9th Virginia Battalion is nowhere & in want of a paymaster. The Colo recommends Mr Robt Foreman to that office as you will see by the enclosed Note. The Colo wants money to pay off their arrearages but seems embarrassed for want of a paymaster. We shall advance him the Sum of Ten Thousand Dollars which is Short of what is due to the Regiment & he must be accountable for the same. We have also advanced Colo Antill one Thousand Dollars for the recruiting service, he wants more, and the New Jersey recruiting officers all are in Want. These officers all agree that Men enlist very fast and we hope there will soon be a respectable army, but we must have more money or quit the Committee room. It seems Genl Mercer was put under parole by a Surgeon of the British army & therefore Considered as a prisoner. Colo Biddle now here tells us he heard just as he left head quarters, that 100 Prisoners & 30 Waggon's had been taken by a Scouting party of ours.

We are Sir, very respectfully, your Obedt Servts, Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Jany 10th. 1777.

I have it in Command to forward the enclosed Resolve, and to request you will bestow that Attention to it which its great Importance demands. To you, the Congress have submitted the Propriety of making an Attack on the Province of Nova Scotia with a View to destroy the immense Quantities of military Stores that are there deposited to be employed against us.<sup>1</sup>

I need not particularize the vast Advantages, or the Glory, resulting from this Expedition should it be happily carried into Execution. Nor need I suggest Motives to stimulate you to undertake it. Being fully convinced that if shall appear to you practicable and calculated to advance the Interest of America, you will most certainly adopt it, I shall only add, that the Destruction of above Half a Million of Stores must be a Severe Blow on the Enemy, and may possibly prove a principal Mean of ridding our Country of those cruel Foes, who, with impious Hands have been spreading Ruin and Desolation over it, to the utmost of their Power. I have the Honour to be with great Respect, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Serv.

J. H. Presid

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:20; and Elbridge Gerry to John Adams, January 8, 1777, note 4.

## John Hancock to the States

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Jany 10th. 1777.

The Necessity of filling up the Army with the utmost Expedition, has induced Congress to direct me to request that you will as soon as possible inform them what Success the recruiting Service has met with in your State, towards raising the Troops required by a Resolve of the 16th of September which was formerly transmitted to you.<sup>1</sup> I am therefore most earnestly to entreat your Compliance with this Resolve as speedily as possible.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be, your most obed. & very hble Serv.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 5:762–63, 7:25; and Hancock to Certain States, January 9, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock added the following sentence to the letter he sent to Virginia: "I am particularly to request you will order Colo. Woods & the West-Augusta Battalions to march immediately to join Genl. Washington, & that you will pay all necessary Attention to the Execution of the enclosed Resolves relative to the State of Virginia." These resolves dealt with the defense of the Virginia frontier and were passed on January 8 in response to a letter of the 4th from George Morgan that is not in PCC. See *JCC*, 7:14–15, 21–22. Richard Henry Lee's draft of these resolves is in Lee Family Papers, ViU.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 10th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves will inform you of the Proceedings of Congress since my last.<sup>1</sup>

I have wrote to the Council of Massachusetts Bay on the Subject of the enclosed Resolve relative to an Attack on Nova Scotia, the Propriety of which the Congress have submitted to that State.

You will please to inform Doctor Morgan and likewise Doctor Stringer of their Dismission from the Service of these States.<sup>2</sup> I am so extremely hurried in the Execution of the Resolves of Congress, that I have only Time to request your Attention to the enclosed.

The late Movements of our Army have filled us with the most anxious Expectation and we are impatient for the Event. I have the Honour to be with perfect Esteem & Regard, Sir, your most obedt. & very hble Sert,<sup>3</sup>

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves on Nova Scotia and on Doctors Morgan and Stringer mentioned in the text of this letter, Hancock also sent Washington resolves about the exchange of one of General Lee's officers, magazines of provisions in Georgia and South Carolina, state recruiting, and supplies of salted meat. *JCC*, 7:18–20, 24–27.

<sup>2</sup> Washington did as Hancock asked on January 18. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:28.

<sup>3</sup> Hancock also wrote a brief letter this day to Robert Morris, enclosing some resolves of Congress that have not been identified, acknowledging receipt of the Executive Committee's January 6 letter, and asking him to forward Hancock's letters of this date to Washington and to the states. Vail Collection, NHi.

## Robert Morris to Silas Deane

Dear Sir

Philada. Jany 11th. 1777

I have written you a long letter on the present State of public affairs<sup>1</sup> & intend this on Commercial matters. Your favour dated Paris 30th Sept. last is the only one I have from you<sup>2</sup> and from the tenor of it I judge that several of yours to me & mine to you must have miscarried. I have long been aware that you wou'd suffer vexation for want of remittances & have often told the Committee so, yet such has been our Situation & Circumstances it was not possible to mend the matter. In a former letter I told you of the several Captures of ships & Cargoes intended for different parts of Europe to provide you with Funds. Our Ports were shut the greatest part of the Summer & now again when we expected them certainly to be open, the Enemy are Cruizing at the mouths of our Bays and along the Coast with more industry than ever. I have told you in my other letter that the Eastern States had little fit for exportation to Europe, their Fisherys being prevented there is no Oil, Fish, whale Bones &c as formerly, they are not employed in making Pot & Pearle ashes as usual & in short there is nothing for an European Market but Masts & Spars from New Hampshire, some little Bees' Wax & Flaxseed in Connecticut & Rhode Island. The Secret Committee gave orders to Mr Langdon to Ship Masts & Spars on the Public Account & to John Bradford Esqr. at Boston to purchase such Prize Goods as wou'd serve for remittance. They Commissioned Mr Shaw at New London to buy Flaxseed &c but all to little purpose. Mr Langdon has done something the rest have not. At New York nothing cou'd be done you must be sensible, indeed Genl Washington was obliged to stop for the use of the Army some Cargoes that Mr. Livingston & Mr Lewis had shipped there. Here we were blocked up the best part of the Season and lost several Valuable Cargoes intended for you. Indeed the principal part of our Trade was obliged to be carried on in small Vessells & these Were hardly sufficient to pay for the necessarys we imported from the West Indias. In Maryland & Virginia we have been buying much Tobacco & as fast as Vessells cou'd be got to carry it to Market

they have been sent off but they are very Scarce in all the States to the Southward of this, and Seamen, Cordage, Canvass & other materials still more Scarce. To send them from one part of the Coast to another was extreemly hazardous whilst our Enemies Cruizers covered the Seas in their very track. However we have been obliged to adopt this mode & buy or charter Prize Ships in N England to go in Ballast for Virginia, Maryland & Carolina. Whether they will get safe in or not is very doubtful but if they do, we hope you will still be provided in the Course of this Winter with satisfactory remittances for we have many thousand hogsheds of Tobacco ready & that Article of all others will make the best remittance. From Carolina they had no Trade at all untill very lately that some small Vessells have gone from hence with flour & Iron to them & some few French Men from the West Indias have ventured thither, however the Committee have lodged Funds & orders with Messrs. Levinus Clarkson & John Dorsius to Ship largely in Rice & Indico, and if they can get Ships this will be done, the same from Virginia & Maryland, and from hence when we can but our River is now full of Ice & our Bay pestered with British Men of War. In short you may perceive clearly that it is absolutely necessary the French shou'd send us aid in the naval line. A few Line of Battle Ships under our direction last summer wou'd have totally destroyed Ld Howes fleet & Transports & a few of them next Summer will command our Rivers & Bays so that Ships may get in & out. When once at Sea they must take their Chance & that we are content to run, but whilst they can ride securely masters at the mouths of our Rivers & Bays it is next to impossible to escape and so we have found it. These Considerations induce me to wish you may have negotiated some loans with the French Court that they may become so interested as to send their men of War in order to Cover their own Remittances. We did not find it necessary to direct Remittances for you into Holland as France cou'd draw on Lisbon, Cadiz &c equally well, but unluckily little has arrived for them to draw. I am very sensible of your difficulties and I think those you are Connected with must be sensible of ours and that they will exert themselves to get them removed, however I wish you may have Negotiated a loan & shipped the Goods and Stores you mention for the West Indias that we may get em from thence in small fast Sailing Vessells unless you cou'd send them out in Men of War of the Line. In the late Confusion & alarm at this place I sent all my Books & papers out of Town where they still remain so that I cannot at present have reference to what I wrote you the 5th June, but I am much concerned that you depend on Insurance being made here. This business has been totally dropped this Summer for altho the Underwriters might otherwise have been willing to Continue it, yet the ample employment every body have found either in public or less hazardous business, induced them to lay it onside, and as things are now Circumstanced it wou'd be impossible to pre-



vail on them to take it up again in this City. New York is in the Enemies hands, so that there is no place but Boston where there is the least chance of getting Insurance done & even there they are not fairly got into their geers again. I hope my Brother has Communicated to you what I formerly wrote him on the Subject of Insurances & that you will have got them done in France or Holland on whatever property you may have Shipped this way.

As yet nothing has arrived nor do I know of any thing you have shipped being taken. Capt. Morgan was taken near Cape May & is but just discharged from the Man of War.<sup>3</sup> He tells me he had but little Goods on-board & that the dispatches were all Sunk. The Young Man that was passenger with him is still detained at New York a Prisoner. I suppose it was by him you wrote respecting the Loan I had mentioned &c. Shou'd you have engaged in a plan of sending out Goods to the Value mentioned & we are tollerably lucky in getting them in, great things will be done, they will sell for enormous prices and I will invest the money in Tobacco, Indico, Rice &c which shall be shipped back fast as possible. The things intended for your Family I suppose were onboard Capt Morgan but have not come to hand. I shou'd have been proud to had an opportunity of sending them forward. I had the pleasure of seeing one of your Brothers here some time since who told me all your Family were well.

Tobacco is to be sure a fine price in Europe and I hope we shall benefit thereby before long both for the Public & in some degree for ourselves also. Shou'd you obtain a French Fleet to come out here, then will be the time to Speculate and I wou'd have you to charter & send out some Ships with Salt for Virginia, Maryland & this place to carry Tobacco back. My Brother will Conduct the Business & you & he must fix the Concern or Shares, but if no fleet, send no Ships, let us wait & look further first. The Congress give me too many employments & heap vastly too much on me for any Man living to do as it shou'd be. If they had left me to manage their Commercial matters & those only I cou'd have done great things, but instead of that all their active business is pushed on me, much against my judgement altho inclination prompts me to do what I can in any line that promotes the Service of my Country.

I wish for time & opportunities to write you much oftner than I do and I am also very impatient to hear from you again being Dr sir, your obedt Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Morris began this long letter on December 20, 1776, and continued it on January 8 and 29, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Deane's letter is in *NYHS Collections*, 19 (1886): 286-87.

<sup>3</sup> The sloop *Mary*, J. Morgan, master, had been taken on November 1, 1776, en route from Bordeaux to Philadelphia. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:10, 932.

## Robert Morris to John Bradford

[January 12, 1777]

Having been called off when I had got thus far on with this letter I am now at the 12th Jany. You will think it strange I shou'd be so long as from the 24th Decr to the 12 Jany writing you a letter & so it seems to me, but I declare to you my time is so taken up with Public business since the Congress departed from hence that I am obliged to neglect my own affairs totally. With respect to any purchase you have made on Speculation in which you have interested me or did intend to interest me, I am content to abide by what you have done and reposing unlimited confidence in your judgment and integrity, I agree that you proceed in such speculations as I formerly proposed to the extent then mentioned, and I will send you money to pay my quota fast as you advise me of the Sums necessary. Thank God I think our City is now perfectly safe and as I think the British Troops must soon evacuate all New Jersey, our intercourse will become free & open again. In the mean time if you are obliged to advance Money or borrow it, to pay my part of the purchases I will chearfully pay the interest. The Congress have appointed myself & two other Members that happened to remain here a Committee to Conduct the Continental business in this place & plenty of it we have & are like to have.

I gave Mr. Alexr Rose & Mr N. Eveleigh of South Carolina letters of introduction to you. These Gentn deposited considerable sums of Money in the Loan office here & took with them the Continental Loan Office Certificates bearing interest. I persuaded them to this measure supposing they wou'd readily get money for the Notes in all or any of the Eastern States, but I depend on you to prevent their being disapointed of which however I hope there is not any danger, but rather than they shou'd suffer I will send them the Money from hence on notice that it is necessary. I am very happy to learn the Alfred is arrived in your Port & her Prize at Bedford in Dartmouth, the Cargo of that Prize will be particularly usefull to the States at this time as the recruiting Service for the New Army goes on very fast. The Wolf is sailed from Virginia with a Cargo of Tobo for Curracoa & I hope will arrive safe. Your draft on me was paid soon as it appeared & if you can draw on me for any Money wanted in our Speculations the bills shall meet equal honor. I Congratulate You on our late Successes in New Jersey and with great esteem remain Dr sr, Your obedt hble servant,

Robt Morris

P.S. I expect to write you seperate letters on public business.

RC (MeHi). A continuation of Morris to Bradford, December 24, 1776.

## Robert Morris to John Jay

Dear Sir

Philada. Jany 12th 1777

I have been possessed of your obliging favr. of the 2d Ulto a considerable time,<sup>1</sup> but being too much pressed with public & private business to permit my being a regular correspondent it is needless to apologize. You undoubtedly must have been acquainted with the Rapid progress made by our Enemies through the Jerseys and the danger to which this City has been exposed for some Weeks past and you will have heard of the removal of Congress to Baltimore in the midst of pannic. This step has been highly censured by many of their Friends and undoubtedly lost them the confidence of some valuable Men.

I confess for my own part I am not amongst the number of those that Censure them for this hasty measure, for when it is considered that the Enemys Troops were within a very few miles of us & no apparent Force sufficient to oppose their progress, it surely was time for a public body on which the support of the American cause so much depended, to provide for their safety. Meer personal safety I suppose wou'd not have induced many of them to fly, but their Security as a body was the object. Had any number of them fallen into the Enemies hands so as to break up the Congress America might have been Ruined before another Choice of Delegates cou'd be had & in such an event they wou'd have been deemed criminal & rash to the last degree. Most of them dislike their present Station & complain horridly, particularly those you esteem, but it seems some others who generally carry their points, like their quarters & are for staying. I suppose it answers some of their purposes and I have but one objection in the world. They have appointed Mr Walton of Georgia, Mr Clymer & myself a Committee to transact all Continental business that may be necessary & proper in this place. The business of this Committee engrosses my whole time & increases daily, so that I am now the veriest Slave you ever saw and wish them back to be relieved.

I wish to Heaven they had removed from hence last winter. If they had, Pennsylvania wou'd long since have had a wholesome constitution, its Strength might have been drawn into proper exertion & her Capital wou'd never have been made to tremble. What has happened is the fruits of that winters Cabals. Our Constitution is disliked, the People divided, unhappy, and consequently weak, the power if any there be, is placed in improper hands and in short the people seem to loose one day, the Confidence they placed in leaders of the day before.

Where it will end God only knows. Dickinson & A. Allen have given mortal stabs to their own Characters & pity it is the wounds shou'd penetrate any further, but they were men of property, Men of fair private Characters & what they have done, seems to pierce through their sides into the Vitals of those who have similar pretentions to Fortune & good Character. The defection of these men is supposed to originate in a desire



to preserve their Estates & consequently glances a suspicion on all that have Estates to loose. I pity them both exceedingly. Dickensons Nerves gave way & his fears dictated a letter to his Brother advising him not to receive Continental money. His Judgment & his virtue shou'd have prevented this act of Folly, I call it such because I believe his Heart to be good & regret much that his exalted Character shou'd be degraded, by what cou'd hardly be called a crime at the time he did it, but he thought the Game was up. A Allen deserves a better fate than he will meet with. Aimiable in private character and deserving of the Felicity he has heretofore enjoyed he has rashly sacrificed it by a hasty resolution. He has long thought it impossible for us to withstand the power of Great Britain & he complained of that Conduct amongst ourselves which has been loudly censured by America's warmest advocates & frequently exposed by the keen sentences of Mr. Jay. However nothing can justify the step he has taken & it seems wrong to paliate it. I will therefore only say I am most sincerely sorry for him. I removed my Family & some of my effects in the heat of our Fright but determined to stay by the City to the last moment. Very happy have I been since, in this determination, as it is fallen in way to be very usefull on many occasions, both to this State & to the Continent, and in every instance I have exerted myself to the utmost. Congress are Sensible of it and have approved all my doings, altho I acted for a considerable time without their Authority. I join in all your Sentiments respecting our good Friend Duane and if I had not been well convinced how Ill used he was by that cursed piece of Slander I shou'd not have troubled him with it, nor shou'd I have sent it when I did, but having heard he was coming to Congress, I thought it my duty to prepare him. I have a letter from him on the subject and think he treats it very properly by despising the report & its author or authors. I wish to heaven the affairs of your state wou'd permit both your attendance at Congress, believe me you & others are wanted there. There is a leader there that you do not like and as I understand they have the rule of the roost totally since their removal to the Southward. Pray shew this to Mr Duane & tell him the next bit of leisure I get shall be devoted to answer his two letters.

I do not pretend to give you any acct of military operations as I suppose you get them from day to day. What a glorious change in our prospects. Pray heaven Continue our Success and grant me an opportunity of Congratulating you on regaining the City of New York. I have not heard from Mr. Deane for sometime past & fear he will complain for want of remittances & Intelligence. These Damnd Men of War plague us exceedingly & have taken many of our Vessells, but we must persevere untill we gain success. I am Dear Sir, Your affectionate Friend & Servt,

Robt Morris

RC (NNC).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.



## Robert Morris to John Langdon

Sir,

Philadelphia Jany 12th 1777

As you would undoubtedly hear of the unhappy situation of this City for some week's past, you would naturally suppose that to be the only cause why you did not hear from me. When the British troops made such a rapid progress through the Jerseys and got within a few miles of us, the Congress thought proper to remove to Baltimore. At that time I sent my family, my books, papers and considerable effects into Maryland but having still a great value here and being desirous of spiriting up our people, all in my power, I determined to wait until the last, happy in having done so, as I have had an opportunity of being very useful both to this country & the general cause. The Congress knew this well, and have appointed myself and two others that remained here, a Committee with full powers to transact all Continental business that may be proper and necessary here. I mention this as an apology for not having wrote you sooner, for I do assure you, the business of that Committee engrosses so much of my time that I cannot attend my own business. The letters I rec'd from you in answer to my proposals for speculating in prize goods &c &c are in the country with my other papers and such variety of business has gone through my hands since that I do not perfectly remember their contents, but think you had made some purchases which I very much approved at the time and wished you to proceed, being certain that goods bought with judgment at moderate prices must answer very well.<sup>1</sup> I continue of the same mind and authorize you to proceed not doubting your utmost care and attention as to quality and prices as well as to the safety of the goods after bought. I wish also that you would buy a good prize vessel, double decked and pick up a cargo for her suitable for France, dispatch her for Bordeaux consigned to Messrs Saml and J H Delap with orders to make sale of both vessel and cargo provided that vessel can be sold for a sum equal to her first cost which I am in hopes will be very reasonable. You'll put in a prudent, careful master and send her away soon as possible because I think the risk of the voyage inconsiderable during the winter. I do not particularize the articles to compose this cargo because I don't know what you can get, but masts, spars, oak plank, beeswax, pearl and potash, fish, oil &c &c are wanted in that country and will answer well if laid in at moderate prices and unless this can be done, I would drop the plan altogether, but if it can be executed reasonably the sooner the better and the value of vessel and cargo not to exceed three thousand pounds lawful money. You'll tell Messrs Delap to hold the proceeds in their hands subject to my orders and if they cannot sell the vessel to send her back to you with a cargo of salt. You will want money to execute this business and I am in hopes can supply yourself by drawing on me. You may depend

the bills shall be punctually paid but if that will not do I will furnish you with money from hence from time to time the sums you may write for.

I am Dr Sir, Your obedient humble servant, Robt Morris

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Morris' letter containing "proposals for speculating in prize goods &c" has not been found, but see Langdon's letter of November 19, 1776, to Willing, Morris & Co., in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:205-6.

## John Hancock to Richard Bache

Sir,

Baltimore, Jany 13th. 1777.

The Danger of employing Persons in the Post Office Department, either as Riders or Deputies, whose Principles are unfriendly to the American Cause, being both great and obvious, the Congress are anxious to prevent it, if possible. With this View they have passed the enclosed Resolve,<sup>1</sup> in Consequence of Information that some Persons have been engaged in that Department, whose Disaffection might probably lead them, either to betray the Dispatches committed to their Care, or to pay so little Attention to their Duty on the Road, as not to arrive in due Time. From this Cause it must have happened, that the Post who should have arrived at Baltimore last Thursday, did not deliver his Dispatches till Sunday Afternoon.

The Congress, therefore, that they may be fully able to judge of the real Characters & Principles of the Persons you have employed in the Post office, have directed that you immediately transmit a List of their Names, together with the List of those who recommended them to you and likewise that you assign Reasons why the late Resolves of Congress for regulating your Department, have not been complied with.<sup>2</sup>

I am, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Richard Bache Esqr, Post Master Genl., Philada."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:29-30.

<sup>2</sup> Bache's January 18 reply to Hancock is in PCC, item 61, 1:1-4.

## John Hancock to Robert Treat Paine

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore Januy. 13th. 1777

The very constant Attention I have been oblig'd to give to Business since my Arrival here, and my unsettled Scituation even to this moment not family necessities about me, tho' I give £25 per mo. this Currey. for my house only two rooms, one floor, have prevented my being able to set down in a quiet manner to write to you, which I fully intended long be-

fore this, but this Day having Rec'd your Friendly Letter of Decr 23d from Middletown, I could not avoid Stealing time to Acknowledge the Receipt of it, and to Thank you for your very kind Remembrance of me & mine, and to assure you that it will at all times afford me much Satisfaction to hear from you, & to know what is passing in your Quarter, & you may Depend in Return every thing from me that passes in my Department. worthy being Communicated. Colonel Steward who was with you in the Jerseys gave me an Account of your Scituation, & of the loss of your fine horse, I really pitied your Case, but knew your Fortitude and the prospect of a speedy Union to your Family would induce you to Surmount all Difficulties, and to press forward to the *Goal* with unremitting Diligence, and wish this Letter may meet you safe at home enjoying the Felicities which you have long been a stranger to, & which I am very Confident you there found equal to your wishes, as I Trust you found your Family happy in health, & doubly so on your Arrival. I Beg my best Respects to Mrs. Paine, & to all Friends with you.

My Scituation upon Leaving Philada. was really distressing, you well know the State of my Family at that time, a Wife but Nine Days in Bed, a little Infant just Breath'd in the World, a large Family & considerable Effects, all to take Charge of, in the Winter Season, cold Houses to put up at, & such a Number of passengers on the Road, doubtful whether I should even obtain Shelter, & among Strangers too. All these Circumstances with many others, needless to mention, plac'd me in a Scituation truly distressing, & indeed is what I cannot Describe tho' I severely felt it. But by the Kind hand of Providence I pursued my Journey and arriv'd at this place without any accident, & my wife & little one & indeed all of us bore the Journey far beyond my Expectation. On my arrival I had no house prepar'd, Mr Purviance was so obliging as to Take us in, & we Remain'd there Ten Days, & we were Treated by him & his Lady with the utmost Civility, in short I never met with more Civility in my life, free from Ceremony, & Desirous of making our Stay Agreeable. Mrs. Purviance a Polite, agreeable Lady, I Respect the Family much, their Civilities will ever endear them to me. I at length got to housekeeping; but the Change was disagreeable enough; from Mr. Purviance's in a good part of the Town & among Friends, to my own & the only one I could get, in a Remote place among Whores & Theives, I had not been Forty eight hours at my house before it was Rob'd, the Theives took out a Trunk with Linnen, Books, papers, some hard Money &c, but the Money was Recover'd & part of the things, that I am oblig'd to keep a good watch lest they should Take every thing out of the house. I long to Return to Boston, I think it my next Turn; I have just Rec'd the new Delegation; some of you must Come on here, for three are oblig'd to be constantly present or the Representation is Destroy'd. I brought your Trunk safe here, & have it with my things in my own house, subject however to be stolen with mine; I will Embrace the first good oppory. to Send it to



you, there is a Vessell here from Boston, if she Returns I believe shall send it, tho' if a prospect of Sending Money soon I shall prefer the Land Carriages. I have lately sent Three Expresses to Boston, you will of course know from them every thing passing in Congress, the last carried a most important Resolve which I am withheld from committing to Paper, but you have a right to see, to the *Council* I must therefore Refer you.<sup>1</sup> The late Successes of Genl Washington in the Jerseys have given a most favourable turn to our affairs, you will undoubtedly know every particular, as early as we, that it will be needless to mention them, but in general the Enemy are Retreating, & by an Express this moment Rec'd it is said they have Cross'd the Rariton, but I hope Genl Putnam will meet them, who is gone the Amboy Road; had not our Troops been so Fatigu'd as to prevent their pushing into Brunswick; and they had gone on, they would have taken not only the Troops & Stores, but £70,000 Sterlg. in the Military Chest, however I hope we shall still get it; in short, My Friend, I think we are in a clever way; the Safety of Genl Lee is insur'd by these Movements, for we Recd an Accott. they were preparing for his Trial at New York, & he would no doubt have been Executed. They have, since the late Success at Trenton, treated our Prisoners very differently, have Releas'd many, among others Mr Carpenter late Barber at Boston who has been so long Confin'd at Halifax & York, he is now here in my house; & Col. Ethan Allen is now walking the Streets of New York, & is to be Exchang'd. I hope soon to be able to give you a good Accott. of things. The Resentment of the Jersey Men is Rais'd, & they are turning out well, & so are the militia in general in Pennsylv. Congress matters go on much as usual, tho' I think they have been more spirited lately, I have Transmitted many Resolves by the three Expresses to our Council, to them I must Refer you.

I shall be oblig'd to you to write me as often as possible, & do give me Accots. of what our assembly is doing, & indeed every thing that is passing with you. You will recollect some Conversation we heretofore had on a particular Subject, & which occasion'd your writing some very particular Letters.<sup>2</sup> You, with respect to your self, will have a fine oppory. of Explaining matters to your own Satisfaction, & I wish things may terminate to your wish; should I be affected by any thing in consequence thereof, I Beg your Candid Representation in my behalf, I know you will do me the Justice to say I have not neglected the Business I was sent upon, you are a Judge of my Station, & I am confident will serve me all you can. Do give me hereafter the Sentimts. of my Constituents, & what Effect some representations had with respect to you & my self &c.

How goes on Cannon Castg.; does *your* Comine. meet, here I do not think they do; what success had you with Gov Trumbull; are they Casting in our Province? Give me your thoughts on the subject of Cannon, & what Dependance for a Supply in your Quarter.



I have insensibly carried this Letter to an immoderate length, that you will Censure me I believe, but I will promise you my next shall be more concise, nor will I trouble you with so long a letter, till I Receive a longer one from you.

Mrs. Hancock, Miss Katy, and (Mr & Mrs Hillegas who are now with me & going to sup here) beg to be Remembered to you. Mrs Hillegas asks when she shall Teaze you again. We are all well. My Respects to all Friends. In all Scituations I shall be fond of Rendring you every Service in my power, & Command me at all times. Rest assur'd that I am with Real Sentiments of Esteem, your Friend & Servt. John Hancock

RC (MHi). Addressed: "To The Honble Robert Treat Paine Esqr. at Boston or Taunton. Recommended to the Care of the Honb. Thom. Cushing Esqr. who is desir'd to deliver it to Mr. Paine if in Boston, if at Taunton, he is desir'd to forward it to that place from his Humb Servt. John Hancock."

<sup>1</sup> Hancock is probably referring to the proposed expedition to Nova Scotia. See Hancock to the Massachusetts Council, January 10, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to several angry letters Paine had written to political leaders in Massachusetts the previous January denouncing John Adams' disparaging comments on Paine's service in Congress. Adams had recently returned to Massachusetts where he had many opportunities to relate his view of the long-standing differences within the Massachusetts delegation. Hancock undoubtedly saw Paine's recent return as a chance to explain their position to the Massachusetts General Court. For Paine's "very particular letters" and a discussion of the divisive issues concerned, see Paine's four letters of January 1, 1776, especially Paine to Joseph Hawley, note 1. See also Hancock to Thomas Cushing, January 17, 1776, note 1.

## Thomas Nelson to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore Jany 13th 1777

I would apologize to you for the trouble I give you, did I not know your readiness to countenance every person, who steps forth to relieve America from the distresses that threaten her. This will be deliver'd to you by Capt Thos Nelson who is going up to join his Regiment under General Washington. He is Brother to the young Gentleman whom I recommended to you the other day. To the honor of this family be it spoken that there are but three Children, Sons of aged Parents, and they are every one of them in the Regular Service, and are now on their march to the Jersies. This Gentleman may perhaps want a supply of Cash sometime hence; You may render him an essential service by answering his drafts, which will be punctually paid at sight. I shall have occasion to trouble you again, when the other Brother passes thro this Town. In the mean time I beg leave to assure you that I am, with great sincerity, Your obedt Servt,

Thos Nelson jr.

RC (MdBj-G).

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir

Baltimore 13th Jany 1777

Since my last we have had accots of many Skirmishes in Jersey in which our Troops have been Victorious. We lost about 20 men at Princetown on the 3d inst among which was some Brave officers. I don't recollect their names except Coll Hazet of Delaware & Major Morris of the Phila Militia. Genl. Mercer was said to be among the slain but it seems he was only wounded & like to do well. He had 5 Bayonet wounds. About 100 of the Enemy were killed in this action & 3 to 400 taken. We have kill'd & taken more than 2000 since Chrismas. Our loss since that time does not exceed 40. The last accot from the Genl. was the 7th inst. He was then at Morristown & the Enemy no where to the westward of Brunswick. I am inclin'd to think that the Humain Mr. Howe is sick of his Winter Campaign & I fear will escape with the Remains of his Army into York. The Ravages committed by the Enemy have had a most excellent effect on the people of Jersey. The Militia now turn out with great spirit & Harrass the Ravagers of their Country in every quarter. I fancy the Tyrant of Britain has been Premature in conferring the Dignity of Knighthood on his Humane Dispenser of Pardons. His Popeship seems to be in a fair way to lose all his Lauralls. The Hessian Officers complain much that they shod be distinguished as Plunderers, when, they say, the British Troops Plunder more than they do. I believe the truth is they both endeavour to excel in what they know will recommend them to their Commander in chief.

I am really at a loss to account for my not receiving any intelligence from N. Hampshire. I am as great a stranger to what is doing in that state as to what's doing in the moon. How goes on your recruiting service? What officers have you for the new army? It is of the last importance that the new Leavies should be Compleated without loss of time. The greater our exertions the sooner we shall put an end to this destructive war.

Business goes on with spirit since we have got out of the Putrid air of the Sodom of America. Several Prizes have lately arriv'd here. The Delaware is again clear of the Enemies ships. I suppose they were call'd in for the protection of York, for it seems the Present inhabitants of that City were exceedingly alarm'd at our late Success.

I shall set out for home in about a fortnight unless I am reelected. In that case I shall have no objection to continuing here till the coming season will admit of traveling with more comfort then at present. We have various reports from Rhode Island but no authentic advices.

My Colleague<sup>1</sup> is well & desires his Compliments to you. We agree very well in sentiment, but, *Inter nos*, N.H. is oftener div—d than she used to be. My Regards to all Friends & be assured that I am with every Sentiment to Esteem, Your Friend &c,

Wm. Whipple

RC (NhD).

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Thornton.

## Board of War to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen,

War Office Baltimore Jany. 14th. 1777.

As the Board are not acquainted with the present Situation of the Arms, Ammunition, and military Stores which were under their Custody before the Departure of Congress from Philada you will be pleased to collect proper Returns and send them as soon as possible to the Board. The Council of Safety of Pensilvania have received and distributed great Numbers and Quantities of Continental Arms &c, and many Stores have been sent by their Order to different places of Security. You will be pleased to procure from them Accounts of their Transactions in these Matters and particularly of the places where the Military Stores were sent, and of what Quantities and Articles they consist. They shou'd also furnish a particular account of the Distribution of the Arms &c among the Militia that the General may order them to be return'd by the Men on their leaving the Camp when the Time of Service expires or the necessity of their Assistance is at an End. Mr. Towers has been order'd to return an Account of all the Stores he knows of, or that are in his Custody to you that you may be the better enabled to comply with this request of the Board. He is also directed to deliver you weekly Returns which you will be pleased from time to time to transmit.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be yr., very obt. hble. Servant,

Richard Peters Secy

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147). In the hand of Joseph Nourse and signed by Peters. Nourse was clerk and Peters secretary of the Board of War.

<sup>1</sup> The Executive Committee's February 4 reply to this letter is printed below.

On January 16 Peters also wrote a letter to the Executive Committee in behalf of the Board of War, asking it "to supply such Continental Troops as may arrive in that City with such Arms, Ammunition, and other military Stores as may be necessary for equipping them and expediting their March to join General Washington." PCC, item 147, fol. 19.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 14th. 1777

Having taken a Copy of the enclosed address from the Convention of New York to their constituents & given it to Mr. Lewis Weiss to translate into the German Language with orders to Print immediately One thousand Copies of it, we send you the original not doubting but it will be



very pleasing to Congress as it has been to us. We recommended Mr Weiss to preserve in his translation the Spirit of the original if possible. The Convention of New York if we remember right desired 300 Copies in Dutch. We mean to send you 2 or 300 Copies to be Circulated amongst the Germans of Virginia & Maryland & the rest to be dispersed amongst those in this province & altho the Convention may publish it in their State, yet few of their publications may reach the rest of America & we wish for orders to publish it here either in News papers or in a pamphlet as may be judged best. You have herewith a letter from Genl. Washington of the 9th,<sup>1</sup> there are later accounts in Town & every day brings fresh intelligence of the Capture of Prisoners or baggage &c. However it is certain the Enemy are Collecting their Force at Brunswick & we must not expect they will close the Campaigne in the disgracefull Style it now wears for them, if they can help it, & we are of opinion they are meditating some blow against Genl. Washington or this place. This opinion is Coroborated by the Account Capt Thos Bell gives us. He was taken at Sea & carried into New York, and after some time got leave to go onshoar where he had an opportunity of seeing & hearing what passed. He says the affair at Trenton came on them totally unexpected and alarmed 'em exceedingly. They ordered all their troops from Long Island except those under Command of Oliver Delancy & about 500 under Govr. Montfort Brown that they nearly swept all away from N York as he does not think there is 1000 left in that place. He left that place last Wednesday & that day a Gentn who had no suspicion of his coming away (for he ran away) told him they were collecting all their Force at Brunswick on purpose to route & brake up Genl. Washingtons army. He learnt also from the Master of a Transport that formerly used this place, that he with many other Transports was ordered up the Sound to Rhode Island to bring down 5000 Troops from thence & he saw the Ships go up the sound. I have sent this Intelligence to Genl Washington informing him that Capt Bell is a Man of Veracity & certainly heard what he relates, but does not aver it of his own knowledge.

I send you herewith a Newspaper brought by Capt Bell who says most of the Men of War are out Cruizing and he understood were to keep our Coast all Winter, they have taken many Prizes & we fear will do us much mischief.

You have herewith a letter Capt Bell brought from a French officer (to RM) who he says is a Count, a very Gentleman like man that was taken in a Sloop bound from Bourdeaux with Powder. This Gentn had dispatches from Mr Deane which he threw overboard, there is a translation of his letter also. This Gentn thinks himself extreamly ill used by Ld Howe, resents it highly & carrys himself very high when he sees anybody belonging to him.



We enclose herewith a kind of Memorial from the Chevalier Devernijou, a Young Gentn that was with General Lee when taken. He signalized himself at that time by the resistance he did make & the strong desire he shewed to defend the General. We ordered him a months pay advance as Capt of Horse to which Genl Washington has appointed him in those now raising in Connecticut. Congress will please to direct whether any Compensation must be made for his losses and this matter deserves serious attention as there will be other applications of the same kind. The French officers alledge that their Monarch makes good the losses his officers meet with in Battle. Genl Gates no doubt will be able to give good Council on this Subject, our officers shou'd be encouraged, but the States must be taken care of. We are told Colo Houssicker is in New York wearing a black Cockade, here he wore a red one. There are bad reports & Suspensions respecting him.

We are sorry to inform you of the Death of Genl. Mercer, which Major Morris (Genl Lees aid du Camp) says happened as he came through Prince Town. We have daily reports of partys taking Prisoners & baggage in the Jerseys. The Militia of that State are certainly turning out, but we hear such of ours as have been out six Weeks talk strongly of returning. We are daily obliged to grant Money for the recruiting service as well as for other public purposes & unless a fresh supply is sent up to Mr Mease we fear being run aground. We have given him another order on the Loan office for 50,000 Dollars, but believe they are not all there yet. With the greatest respect we remain, Sir, Your obedt. Servants,<sup>2</sup>

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

P.S. Colo Fleming of the 9th Virginia Regt. wants a paymaster & enclosed is his recommendation of a person he has employed to act in that Station untill one is appointed.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 9 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:449, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:486-87.

<sup>2</sup> This day Morris also wrote to Leonard Jarvis, a deputy Continental prize agent in Massachusetts, acknowledging receipt of letters from Jarvis to the Marine and Secret Committees and stating that "You will doubtless have heard that Congress are removed to Baltimore, & I am left here, Chairman of a committee appointed to conduct the Continental business at this place, all which I mention that you may know I am fully empowered to give directions in the marine & mercantile affairs of the Continent." Lee Family Papers, MH-H.

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir,

Baltimore, Jany 14th. 1777.

I do myself the Pleasure to acknowledge the Receipt of your two last Favours of the 10th Inst. together with the several Letters therein mentioned.

The Sentence of the Court Martial in the Case of Colo. Campbell, which was formerly referred to Genl. Schuyler, you will perceive from the enclosed Resolve, the Congress have again referred to Genl. Gates; who being on the Spot in Baltimore has given his opinion (a Copy of which I enclose) that the Court Martial acted in an unprecedented Manner, and that Colo. Campbell did not deserve to be cashiered for the Crimes laid to his Charge.<sup>1</sup>

The North Carolina Bills I must request you will pay. For which Purpose, I have endorsed them, and now enclose them, to you. I have kept Copies of them and they will be charged to the State of North Carolina.

The enclosed Resolves are all that have been passed since my last, and I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them.

The Paper, Wax, &c &c came safe to Hand. Since writing for those Articles, I have luckily been able to procure some very good Paper in this Town, and shall therefore not trouble you for any more of that Article.

We are very desirous of hearing good Accounts, and doubt not, you will forward them with as much Pleasure as we can receive them.

Wishing, with the greatest Sincerity, the Compliments of the Season, and every other happiness, to you and the other Gentlemen of the Committee, I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Sevt.

John Hancock Prest.

[P.S.] The Comee. have agreed that Mr. Dunn shall take the Command of the armed Prize taken by the Andrew Doria & I enclose him a Commission, which you will please to fill up, we have agreed to call the Vessel the *Surprise*, this Commission to be Lieut. & Commander.<sup>2</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and part of postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:29. For additional information about the case of Col. Donald Campbell, see Hancock to Washington, August 20, note, and August 22, 1776, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:32. The *Surprise* was formerly H.M. Sloop *Racehorse*. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:954n.2.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

My Dear Sir

Baltimore Januy. 14th 1777

Your friendly & Obliging private Letter of 8th Inst.<sup>1</sup> reach'd me yesterday, I thank you for your kind Notice of me & mine amidst the multiplicity

of Business which must momentarily engage your Attention. The Marks of Regard you are pleas'd to mention as contain'd in the few hasty Lines I Sent you are very far short of what I early Express'd after I had the pleasure of a Connection with you, & be assur'd, Sir, in whatever Scituation I may hereafter be, or however distant from you, it will be a pleasurable circumstance to continue and keep up a Correspondence, not only in the Commercial & publick Line, but in a solid, friendly & free intercourse of Letters, and without hesitation I shall tell you, that hereafter I shall take the Liberty of a Friend, [. . .] all Freedom in Addressing you, as Business will Admit, and shall be Ambitious of being Reckoned among the List of your Real Friends.

I exceedingly approve your Conduct with respect to the Ships in your River, & think your officers discover'd the Spirit of Men, at same time your interference under the then Circumstances was absolutely necessary, I dare say your disposition of the several Arm'd Vessells after you are fully convinc'd of the removal of the ships from your Capes, will fully meet the approbation of Congress. Without the least appearance of Flattery I can assure you your whole Conduct since our Flight is highly approv'd, & happy I am that you Remain'd. Many agreeable Consequences have Resulted from it, and your continu'd Exertions will be productive of great good. I must therefore beg you will continue as long as you can, tho' I sincerely wish you a happy Sight of good Mrs. Morris, but I fear your departure from Philada. might Occasion a Relaxation that would be prejudicial. I know however you will put things in a proper way, indeed all depends upon you; and you have my hearty thanks for your unremitting Labours. The Publick are much Indebted to you, & I hope to see the Day when those publick Acknowledgments shall be made you.

I constantly Send you & the Come. the Resolves of Congress, a copy at same [time goes] to the General, that you need not take the trouble to Copy any, as you may Depend regular Copies are forwarded, & to every Departmt.

I have got to Housekeeping, but really my Friend, in a very poor house, & but just Furniture sufficient to live tolerably decent, tho' when I Tell you I give £25 this Currency per mo. you would Judge it to be amply furnish'd. I have only two Rooms below, & one of them [I was] oblig'd to let my Servants occupy. In point of Convenience I wish to Return to Philada. which brings me to the hint in your Letter. I think Sir, that as the Printing presses are here & set to work, & as money is so exceedingly wanted, & a Removal just at this Time would occasion so great a Delay, that it would not be prudent to think, unless thro the greatest necessity of a Removal at present, nor untill the last of March. By that time I hope we shall be able to return or to fix upon some other place for our Residence, that must depend on Circumstances. As things have turn'd out I am very sorry we Remov'd at all, & indeed I think we were full hasty enough, it damp'd people much, but your Continuance there & Conduct-

ing Business there will give a spring, & Join'd to the Influence of our successes will make up for the flight of Congress.

I am much oblig'd to you for your kind Notice of my Family Connections, I assure you, my Friend, under their then Scituation, I left Philada. with a heavy heart, but by the kind hand of Providence we arriv'd safe at this place, and I must make my self as happy as I can, tho' very inconveniently Scituated.

We have not yet had a Representation from New York, Delaware or Maryland, the latter is rather strange. The News from Congress you have in the Resolves which I have & shall constantly forward you. Money is signing with all possible speed, tho' we want some of your Philada. Signers who would Expedite the [busine]ss. Marine Matters we have little [...] No Books nor papers. The Lexington [...] down & will soon be ready for the Sea. [The] Marine Committee [...] shall determine about Nicholson & the Lexington & you shall know in my next.<sup>2</sup> I am so often call'd upon, & oblig'd to attend to all kind of Business, that I have hardly time to write any Friend. I long to see you here, & yet you must stay at Philada. I have some of your own wine left for you. I wish to have one Set down with you in my poor habitation, I know no one more welcome. I must bid you Adieu. Business calls.

Mrs. Hancock, Miss Quincy [& my] little Girl are well. I wish Mrs. Morris was in the Town. I hope if you come to Bush, you will bring her & pay a short Visit here, it must be so. I beg my best Respects to Mr Clymer & Mr. Walton, and believe me to be with every Sentiment that Respect & Esteem can Inspire, My Dear Sir, Your very Obedt Sert,

John Hancock

[P.S.] Coll. Harrison & Mr Hooper are sick, the latter with a fever.

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See Committee of Secret Correspondence to Henry Johnson, February 24, 1777.

## Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter

My Dear Col.

Baltimore Jan. 14 1777

Tho I have wrote pretty fully to Col. Tayloe, upon the present state of our affairs & sent him the papers, which I know you will partake of; yet I cant help saying a word, to convince you, that I can never forget you.

Dont you give us credit for our good policy in removing from Philadelphia? Nothing else cou'd awaken the Whigs of that State to a sense of their danger. The lethargy of the middle States was really alarming; thank God! it is removed, our new Army once well on foot, & all is safe, but I believe, my friend, we must be content with homespun the rest of our lives.



Doctor Bond promised to procure for you, a certain method of granulating sugar, he is much pleased with your intention, says the world is greatly obliged to [you . . .]<sup>1</sup> happy to assist your designs. [. . .]<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia, I am sure prevented his complying with his promise: as that confusion is pretty well over, I will write to him to send it to me. The same reason has prevented your receiving the Philadelphia Ledger. There is a good paper published here, which will now contain all authentic intelligence. If you chuse it, I will send it.

If I have not been so punctual as I ought in the execution of your commands, I hope you will not impute it to want of inclination. I assure you I have little time I can call my own, & that irregular & uncertain. It is now past 12 at night & Mrs. Lee calls to bed. My best respects to Mr. Carter, his Lady & the family. Adieu my friend. Francis Lightfoot Lee

RC (ViHi).

<sup>1</sup> MS damaged; approximately three words missing.

## Secret Committee to the Commissioners at Paris

Honorable Gentlemen

Philada. Jany 14th. 1777

I have the honor to enclose herein a Copy of two Resolves of Congress passed the 19th & 29th Novr by which the Secret Committee are directed to import two hundred & twenty Six Brass Canon & arms and equipage compleat for three thousand Horse,<sup>1</sup> you'l observe they are also directed to Confer with the Canon Committee as to how many they can provide here of the Field pieces, but we pay little regard to that part, well knowing they will not be able to procure proper metal for many of them.

Therefore I must request in the Name and on behalf of the Secret Committee that you will Contract immediately for these necessary supplys & send them out to these States by various conveyances as quick as possible. Indeed I hope you may procure some line of Battle Ships to come out with them & then there will be little danger of their coming safe. I most sincerely hope the Court of France may be disposed to favour all our Views, that they will accomodate you with sufficient loans to pay for these & all other Stores we want from Europe for altho we have plenty of Valueable produce that wou'd soon provide you with ample Funds if we cou'd get it exported safely, yet the difficultys & impediments we meet with render it impossible to get it away half fast enough. Nothing in our power shall be left undone & Mr Thos. Morris will be ordered to supply you with Money fast as he receives it from the net proceeds of our Consignments.<sup>2</sup> I have the honor to be, with great esteem & regard, Honorable Gentlemen, Your most Obedt Servant,

Robt Morris, Chair Man of the Secret Committee

P.S. These resolves wou'd have been sent long since but our port has been long blocked up by British Men of War & the Confusion we were put in

on the rapid March through the Jersey & near approach to this City by the Enemy, put it totally out of our power to forward any dispatches for some time past.

R M

original

RC (PPAmP). Written and signed by Robert Morris.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 6:963, 992.

<sup>2</sup> As chairman of the Secret Committee, Robert Morris this day wrote the following to his brother Thomas: "We have this day transmitted an order to the Honorable Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esquires to contract for 266 Brass Field Pieces, and Arms & Equipage for Three Thousand Horse. We request you will give every aid and assistance in your power towards the expeditious execution of this order in every respect either as to the purchase or transportation of them, and as funds come into your hands from the Neat proceeds of our Consignments, you are to Supply them with the Money to pay for these and other Stores they are or may be ordered to supply." Franklin Papers, PPAmP.

## Secret Committee to Robert Morris

In Secret Committee January 13th. 1777

Agreed that Thomas Morris and William Lee, Esquires be joint Agents for superintending and directing all the Commercial business of Congress in Europe, and that they be allowed one thousand pounds sterling annually each of them, over and above the contingent expences of commission to their Factors in different places, travelling expences, hire of Expresses and dispatches of all kinds, postage of letters, Clerks, and all other extra expences.

Sir,

Baltimore 14th January 1777

Above you have our opinion touching our commercial agents in Europe and their allowance. If it meets your approbation, be pleased to prepare and sign such a letter for them jointly or seperately, as you think will answer and send either for us to sign and forward.

We expect a vessel of war will be sent from hence, directly upon our receiving further accounts from the Jersies, as well to carry the state of things there, as other dispatches. It will be a fine opportunity of sending the above letter, or any dispatches you may have for France. The draft in favor of Messrs. Lux & Bowley is completed, and we shall endeavour to be in readiness for Mr. D. Stewart.<sup>1</sup> It gives us great pleasure to learn that your attention will be much turned to the business of our department, well knowing that nothing is of greater importance than the punctuality of our remittances. Can you send the late Cargo from Georgia away? or will you have go from hence in the ship of war above mentioned. Indigo, if it cannot conveniently be exported from Delaware, may bear the expence of being sent hither for exportation.

We expect soon to hear the determination concerning the Friendship, and remain with esteem, Sir, Your most obedient and very Humble servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Francis Lewis

Wm. Whipple

P.S. A Waggon now going to Philadelphia with goods Mr. Snowden, will be returning empty, perhaps the Indigo may be cheaply sent that way.

Tr (NN).

<sup>1</sup> See Secret Committee Summary of Proceedings, March 6, 1777; and Robert Morris to John Hancock, January 6, 1777.

## James Wilson to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Carlisle 14th Jany 1777

Congress see, at last, the Propriety of distributing the executive Business of the Continent into different Departments, managed by Gentlemen, not Members of Congress, and whose whole Time and Attention can be devoted to the Business committed to their Charge. Measures were adopted, when I left Baltimore, for making the necessary Arrangements.<sup>1</sup>

There is an Office, which, I believe, would be of considerable Use to the Public, if properly discharged. I will describe to you my Ideas of it.

The Duties of the Officer should be—to manage all Admiralty Causes, on Behalf of the Continent, in the Courts of Admiralty and Appeal, where the Congress sits—to conduct all Enquiries and Prosecutions instituted by Congress—to give his Opinion upon such Questions in the civil and maritime Laws, and the Law of Nations as shall be stated to him, for that Purpose, by Congress, the Board of Admiralty, the Board of Commerce, or the Committee of secret Correspondence—to draw, or reduce to Form public Instruments, when required by Congress, or the Boards, or Committee aforesaid.

Several other Duties will naturally fall to his Share, which cannot be enumerated, nor comprised under any general Head.

The Propriety of the first Article is obvious. I shall suggest one advantage, that will probably result from it. It will be of Importance that the Laws and Practice of the Courts of Admiralty should be brought, as soon and as well as possible, into a System. By the Intervention of Juries, which are unknown in the Admiralty Courts of other Countries, this is rendered a Matter of much Delicacy and Difficulty. The uniform Practice of one, whose Duty and Business it would be to make this Subject his particular Study, wou'd be of considerable Use. All conversant in Courts know that they receive a Tincture from the Practioners as well as from the Judges.



The second Head of the Duty of this Officer is, in my Opinion, absolutely necessary. Enquiries must be had into the Management of public Affairs: Prosecutions also must be instituted against public Officers, who are accused of mal-conduct. When a Committee is appointed for such Purposes; it is every Body's Business to manage Matters—you know the Consequence—it is no Body's Business. The Friends of the Person accused think themselves, and are thought by others, justified in doing every Thing in his Behalf. It is troublesome—it is disagreeable, without having an official Obligation and an official Justification, to undertake the Task of Prosecutor, to manage the Examination of Witnesses who appear, to direct others to be sent for, who, from the Course of the Testimony, are discovered to be capable of throwing Light upon the Subject, and to take many other Steps, without which the Matter cannot be sifted to the Bottom. The Result is, that Things are Superficially passed over, without Satisfaction to the Public, to those who make the Enquiry, or him, concerning whom it is made; provided he has been innocent. An Officer, appointed to manage Enquiries and Prosecutions, on Behalf of the Public, would prevent these Mischiefs.

The third Branch of the Duty of this Officer is by far the most important. I hope the United States will never be involved far in the Maze of European Politics, but it is incumbent upon us to know something of them, even to steer clear of them. Every Letter from our Commissioners at foreign Courts—almost every Resolution of Congress about foreign Affairs will bring into View some Principle of the civil or maritime Law, or of the Law of Nations. It is impossible for Members of Congress, however enlarged their Genius, and however extensive their Knowledge may be; accurately to investigate Subjects of this Kind amidst the Hurry of so much other Business, which likewise demands their Attention. Treaties are considered, in Europe as a Kind of Science. In our Transactions with European States, it is certainly of Importance neither to transgress, nor to fall short of those Maxims, by which they regulate their Conduct towards one another.

All States as far as I know, have an Office similar to that which I have described. It includes Part of the Office of Advocate General, and Part of that of Attorney General in England.

If your Sentiments upon this Subject correspond with mine, you will mention it to Congress. If they agree to institute the Office; and no one offers for it better qualified, in your Opinion, than myself; I will be obliged to you for proposing me. My Reading and Course of Studies have been such as, in some Measure, to prepare me for it. One Thing I can engage—that no Pains nor Industry shall be wanting on my Part, to qualify myself as fully for it as possible.

I have expressed myself with all the Openness of a Friend to a Friend. I would not mention the Subject, if I did not think it of Consequence. I would not mention myself, if I did not think I could be of Service in this



Line. I have not been so unsuccessful in private Life, as to be obliged to obtrude myself upon the Public.

You will make such Use of what I have written as your Judgment and your Friendship shall tell you is proper.

I am, Dear Sir, Your very humble Servant, James Wilson

P.S. I presume you are now at Baltimore: if at Philadelphia I will be obliged to you for a few Lines on the Subject of this Letter.<sup>2</sup> Direct your Letter to the Care of Mr. William Null Mercht in Baltimore. If I should be still here when it comes to his Hand, he will forward it to me.<sup>3</sup>

RC (NjHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wilson was a member of the committee that had been appointed on December 26, 1776, "to prepare a plan for the better conducting the executive business of Congress." *JCC*, 6:1041-42.

<sup>2</sup> See Robert Morris to James Wilson, January 31, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> This day Wilson also wrote the following letter to Arthur St. Clair. "It is long since I have had the Pleasure of hearing from you; but am sensible that you have as good, if not better Reasons for not writing than ever I had. The active and glorious Scenes in which you have lately bore a Share are a sufficient Apology to your Friends for not being favoured with your Letters. It comforts me to hear of you, when I cannot hear *from* you.

"I have enjoyed nine Days at Home; and, in that Time, have seen my Family encreased by the Addition of a fine young Boy. The Situation of public Affairs is so interesting that I find myself incapable of fixing upon those tranquil Pleasures in my Library of which I have often formed such fond Ideas when perplexed and distracted with Business. While I cannot forbear thinking of the Public, I believe it will be best for me to continue acting in it (provided that can happen with Propriety) and return to Baltimore as soon as I can leave Mrs Wilson.

"I feel very sensibly for General Mercers Misfortune, and for the Loss the Service will sustain in being deprived, for some Time, of his valuable Talents. I hope however, he will recover and do well.

"Colonel Mackay and Major Butler will inform you of the very extraordinary Proceedings of the Captains and Subalterns in the Westmoreland Regiment. They have gone so far as even to suspend the Major. You know his Worth and Character. From all the Accounts I have had from Gentlemen upon whose Judgments I can rely, I am satisfied, that he has had great Merit as an officer; and that his Merit has been the Cause of the Persecution raised against him. But I need not stimulate your own Friendship for him.

"These Committee Appointments play Vengeance. If the Captains and Subalterns succeed in this Stroke against their Major, I have no Doubt but that the next one will be aimed at the Head of the Colonel. Indeed I have good reason to conclude that this is Part of the Plan originally laid." St. Clair Papers, OHi.

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Baltimore 14t Janry. 1777

As I have Wrote to you so lately as the 1t and 5t instant, I have little more at present to acquaint you with, than that by the Blessing of God I am well. To hear from me I well know will be a Satisfaction to you, tho I

can easily beleive from my own Desire to hear more frequently from you and the Family than I have done of late. My last Letter was from Mr Lyman of the 21<sup>t</sup> of Novr wherein I have any particular acco of your own and Family Wellfare. But I trust that a merciful Providence takes care of, and Protects you and them. As I am by my Situation acquainted with most of the Oppertunities of Writing to the eastward, so I generally Embrace them, and I Wish my Friends would in Return Write to Me as often as they can.

As all Material Intelligence comes at present from the Eastward it is probable you will have an earlier Intelligence of what is going on [in] the Jerseys than I can inform you of. In the late Skermishes at Princetown &c it seems the Enemy sustained a Loss in killed, Wounded and Prisoners of about 5 or 6 hundred, the loss on our Part Very inconsiderable. The Enemy were by the last Acco. collected at Brunswick, Genl. Washington about 20 miles Northerly from them at Morris Town. The Enemy would not continue long in that Situation, so that We may soon expect to hear farther Action in that Country. We have no News from R. Island since the Enemy landed there.

I hear that Oliver has lately gone Home, and that there has been a Colledge Vacation on Acco. of their not having a Steward to provide for the Scholars, but I hope that Inconveniency is before now remedied, as I should be sorry that he should lose any time, and Wish he might be under the best advantages for Improvement.

I Wish these troublesome Times were over, that We might enjoy those peacefull and happy Days which We have formerly done. But this I do not Wish for till the Rights of the Country are fully secured. How long a hardened unjust Foe will Maintain the Controversy God only knows. Well Satisfied I am that the Force which they now have in this country will be Very unequal to Subdue it. I shall not expect to Return 'till next spring. Mr Sherman is now here and I understand that no other Gentleman will come from Connecticut this Winter.

My best Regards to my Family and Freinds. I hope they all enjoy themselves Well this cold season which I hope is not proportionably as severe at the Northward as it is here. If so it must be in the Extremes. Take Care of your Health, and may the richest of Heavens Blessings be your Portion. And kindly accept this hasty Letter from him who is yours with the most inviolable Affection.

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtHi).

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 15<sup>th</sup>. 1777.

Since writing yesterday I have Nothing further in Charge from Congress, but to transmit the enclosed Resolves, by which you will find, that

they have adopted such Measures as if properly and vigorously executed, cannot fail to establish the Credit of the Continental Currency, upon which, every Thing depends.<sup>1</sup> The Depreciation of our Money has been for some Time past, a growing Evil; but I trust a Foundation is now laid by Congress for putting a Stop to it.

Our Anxiety to hear from the Army still continues—and no Wonder; as the Movements of the two Armies, may produce Events of so great Moment, as to be attended either with the Ruin of our Army or the Salvation of America.

General Schuyler has wrote in the most pressing Terms for Steel & Nail Rods; and I am to request you will comply with the enclosed Resolve, and forward the Quantities therein mentioned, to the Northern Department, as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.  
John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] The Inclos'd Letter please to forward to General Washington by the first good oppory. It does not require an Express purposely.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:35–37.

<sup>2</sup> On January 14 Congress had directed the Executive Committee to send “three tons of steel and five tons of nail rods” to General Schuyler. *JCC*, 7:33. See also Schuyler to Hancock, December 30, 1776. PCC, item 153, 2:513–21; and *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1495–97.

## John Hancock to Philip Schuyler

Sir, Baltimore Jany 15th. 1777.

I enclose to you sundry Resolves of Congress relative to your Department, to which I must refer your Attention.<sup>1</sup>

The Depreciation of Continental Currency having been for some Time past a growing Evil, it became absolutely necessary to put a Stop to it. With this View, & in Hopes to establish the Credit of it, the Congress have passed the enclosed Resolves, which if properly executed by the respective States, will I am perswaded, have the Effect.

I have wrote to Mr. Morris & the Comee. in Philada. to forward the Steel, & Nail Rods agreeably to your Desire, and doubt not you will receive them in due Time. I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. J. H. Presidt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: “Genl. Schuyler, Albany. Sent by Genl. Gates.”

<sup>1</sup> Since Hancock’s last letter to Schuyler, written on December 30, 1776, Congress had passed resolves relating to the northern army on January 6, 9, 11, 13, and 14. See *JCC*, 7:15, 23, 24–25, 29, 32, 33–34.

## John Hancock to the States

Gentlemen, (Circular) Baltimore Jany 15th. 1777.<sup>1</sup>

In Obedience to the Commands of Congress, I do myself the Honour of transmitting the enclosed Resolves, to which I am to request your Attention, as well as your Compliance therewith.<sup>2</sup>

The Depreciation of the Continental Currency having been for some Time past a most growing Evil, it became absolutely necessary to provide some Remedy against it. With this View and in Hopes of establishing the Credit of it, the Congress have adopted and recommended to the several States, such Measures, as if properly & vigorously executed, will most undoubtedly be attended with Success.

I hope the Dispatches which I forwarded to you by three several Expresses on the 25th & 30th Decr. & 10th Jany. have been duely received.

I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, Your most obed. & very hble Svt.  
J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Endorsed by Hancock: "The Letters to Annap[oli]s & as far as Georgia Sent by Major Johnson."

<sup>1</sup> The RC's of this letter to the assemblies of Maryland and New Hampshire are dated January 14. Red Books, MdAA; and Revolutionary Correspondence, Nh-Ar.

<sup>2</sup> See the January 14 resolves on Continental currency in *JCC*, 7:35–37.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir, Baltimore Jany. 15th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves I do myself the Honour to transmit in Obedience to the Commands of Congress as necessary for your Information. By them you will perceive that in Order to restore the Credit of the Continental Currency, the Congress have adopted, & recommended to the States such Measures as if properly executed cannot fail to produce the Effect.<sup>1</sup>

Doctor Potts, who is ordered to repair to Ticonderoga, I am directed by Congress to inform you, is so highly recommended to them, that they wish to have him appointed in the Room of Doctr. Stringer in that Department.<sup>2</sup>

Your two Favours of the 5th & 7th inst. I had the Honour of receiving in the Order of their Dates, and immediately laid them before Congress.<sup>3</sup>

The Hessian Officers, taken at Trenton, arrived here yesterday, and are ordered immediately to Dumfries in Virginia.

The enclosed Letters & other Papers relative to the Army and Appointments therein,<sup>4</sup> having come to Hand since you were invested with Power to fill up Vacancies, and to make such Arrangements as you might think proper, I transmit them to you for your Attention & Consideration—and



have the Honour to be, with the most perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed & Very hble Servt.<sup>5</sup>

John Hancock Presidt.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves on Continental currency mentioned in this letter, Hancock also sent Washington a January 14 resolve about supplies for General Schuyler's army. *JCC*, 7:33, 35-37.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:34; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:40.

<sup>3</sup> These letters are in PCC, item 152, 3:437-40, 445, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:467-71, 477-78.

<sup>4</sup> For further information about these enclosures, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:39-40.

<sup>5</sup> This day Hancock also sent Washington this brief letter: "The two Prisoners mentioned in the above Resolve, who have been treated with the utmost Severity by the Enemy and have experienced the greatest Hardships while Prisoners among them, it [is] the Desire of Congress you will employ in the Manner you think most proper, and beneficial to the Service." Washington Papers, DLC. The prisoners in question were Walter Cruise and Richard Carpenter. *JCC*, 7:32.

## Francis Lewis to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore 15 Janry 1777

I have been favoured with your letter of the 7th Inst,<sup>1</sup> and as it principally related to the business of the Ordinance Board, I am now to inform you that the members who at Phila. constituted that Committee are at present absent, and from the pressing applications of Generals Washington, Schuyler, & Col. Knox for Cannon, the Congress has appointed Messrs. Haywood, Whipple & self to that department, a department that is quite new to us and therefore cannot be executed with the precision we could wish, especialy as Mr. Paine (the former Chairman) has taken with him all the documents relative to that board.<sup>2</sup>

Pursuant to the aforesaid applications, Congress has directed the Committee to procure Ten six Inch Brass Howitzers, forwarded to Tyconderoga as soon as may be.<sup>3</sup> We are therefore of opinion that Mr. Byers be immediately employed in casting those Howitzers, and the Council of Safety at Phila. be desired to agree with him upon the best terms they can, but should Mr Byers for want of proper Moulds or by other obstructions, be incapable of casting Howitzers, in that case, he should be employed in casting as many brass Field Pieces as he may be furnished with Mettle for that purpose.

The proposals made by Messrs Imbert & Co. we have carefully perused; but from the present distance of Place and other cogent reasons, we are at a loss in giving a satisfactory answer, but imagine that either Mr Imbert should be here to make his Contract, or that he be reffered to the Council of safety at Phila. in behalf of the Congress for the same, as that Board must be more competent Judges of its practicability than we can be at this distance, especialy as such a Foundery will be erected upon

a large Scale. We think also the following Queries should be previously investigated, Vizt Where is the Foundry to be erected so as to be most convenient for the supply of Sea Coal. From Whence is the supply of Mettle to be obtained. What number of Brass Cannon of certain Sizes, can be delivered in any given time; and at what Price per pound &c, they furnishing all materials, or (versá visá) We furnishing them.

In their proposals they ask what price we will give in Government Contracts. It is customary to know first what price they ask. However as the General Officers are very urgent with Congress, that an ample train of Field Artillery be provided for the ensuing Campaign, we could wish a contract of this kind might be effected, therefore if you think Mr Imbert & Co. equal to this business *He* should be prevailed with to come here. I am, Dr. Sir, Your very Humble Servt. Fras Lewis

RC (NNC).

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 7, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> The committee "for procuring cannon" had been appointed on December 24, 1776. *JCC*, 6:1039. See also John Hancock to Robert Treat Paine, February 9, 1777, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> Congress' January 6 resolve only mentions "a sufficient quantity of cannon, for . . . Ticonderoga." *JCC*, 7:15.

## Marine Committee to Samuel Purviance, Jr.

In Marine Committee 15th January 1777

Ordered that Messrs. Purveyance & Stewart the Continental Marine Agents in the State of Maryland be directed to proceed immediately to provide Timber for building the two thirty six gun Frigates ordered to be built in the said State, and to proceed in other respects to provide materials for the completion of said Frigates.<sup>1</sup>

John Hancock

Richard Henry Lee

Wm. Whipple

[*P.S.*] The particular Dimensions shall be deliver'd you.

RC (NN). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Hancock, and Whipple, with postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Congress had authorized construction of these frigates on November 20, 1776. *JCC*, 6:970.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir

Baltimore 15th January 1777

My last was the 7th inst since which I have not rec'd any of your favors, though I am in anxious expectation of a letter from you every

post. I hope you'll find no difficulty in procuring the two vessels to send here for iron and flour. Several vessels have lately arrived here from different parts of New England and have brought a considerable quantity of sugar which has made the sale of that article rather dull but I don't find the price to be lowered though other articles in the price current enclosed in my last will meet a much quicker sale. I hope you'll be able to fit out the vessel ordered by the Secret Committee; many vessels are wanted to export produce from the Southern States and if you can purchase 3 or 4 besides those already ordered at reasonable prices you will do a very acceptable service. I suppose you will want money; shall therefore send what remains in my hands of the 20,000 per first opportunity; if you want more you must let me know it and I will endeavor to forward it.

The last accounts from General Washington was the 7th inst. He was then at Morristown about 28 miles from Brunswick where the enemy's main body lay. He was forming some plan to attack the enemy. There had been many skirmishes in which our people had been victorious. We have killed and taken of the enemy since Christmas upwards of 2000 and the utmost that we have lost does not exceed 40. The ravages committed by the enemy in Jersey has had a most excellent effect; the inhabitants now turn out with spirit and breathe vengeance against the ravagers of their Country. The British Tyrant's humane Dispenser of Pardons it seems had cantoned his troops out in the several towns from Burlington to Elizabeth Town with orders to the officers of the several posts to collect all the provisions and forage allowing the inhabitants so much as they supposed necessary for the subsistence of an ordinary family—the remainder they were to consider as a magazine of the enemy and seize for the King—thus we see how those miscreants commonly called Tories are to be treated by their good friend. I heartily wish all the States would follow the good example of their oldest sister Virginia and banish all those wretches.<sup>1</sup> I enclose you papers which contain some things that ought to be spread thro' the States among which is the Address of the Convention of New York. This piece is printing in the German language.<sup>2</sup> The Crisis is a most excellent thing. I wish the author was more at leisure that the world might benefit more by his speculation. Our eldest sister Virginia has set a very good example which ought to be followed. Several prizes have arrived here lately. We are in daily expectation of hearing from France.

Adieu my Dear Sir and believe me to be your sincere friend &c,

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> On January 17, 1777, the New Hampshire Assembly gave "disaffected" inhabitants a 90-day grace period in which to sell their property and leave the state. *N.H. State Papers*, 8:468.

<sup>2</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 7, 1777, note 2.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir,

Baltimore Jany 16 1777

We receivd a letter a few days ago from the Council of Massachusetts Bay, requesting a Sum of Money for Payment of a Bounty to the Troops to be raisd in that State. Accordingly three hundred thousand Dollars are ordered for that Purpose, which will be forwarded to the Paymaster in Boston as soon as it can conveniently be done.<sup>1</sup> In the Mean Time I hope our Assembly will advance if necessary, for the Levies must be made at all Events.

I observe that our Assembly have made it necessary that three of their Delegates should be present & concurring in opinion, before the Voice of our State can be taken on any Question in Congress. I could wish it had been otherwise.<sup>2</sup> Three only of your Deligates are now present. It may so happen at other Times. One of them may be sick. He may be on a Committee or necessarily absent on publick Business, in which Case our State will not be effectually represented. While I am writing at the Table in Congress, a worthy Colleague<sup>3</sup> is unavoidably employd on Business of the Publick at home, and the two present cannot give the Voice of the State upon a Matter now in Question. Were all the three present, one of them might controul the other two so far as to oblige them to be silent when the Question is called for. But I only mention the Matter, and submit, as it becomes me, to the Judgment of my Superiors.

Major Hawley and my other patriotick Fellow Labourers, Are they alive and in Health? I have not receivd a Line from any of them, excepting my worthy Friend Mr Nath Appleton, whose Letter I will acknowledge to him by the first opportunity. My Friends surely cannot think I can go thro' the arduous Business assignd to me here, without their Advice & Assistance. I do not know whether you ever intend to write to me again. Assure the Major from me that a few more of his "*broken Hints*" would be of eminent Service to me.<sup>4</sup>

You cannot imagine how much I am pleasd with the Spirit which our Assembly discovers. They seem to have put every County into Motion. This forebodes in my Mind that something great will be done. I have not, since this Contest began, had so happy Feelings as I now have. I begin to anticipate the Establishment of Peace on such Terms as independent States ought to demand, and I am even now contemplating by what Means the Virtue of my Countrymen may be secured for Ages yet to come—Virtue, which is the Soul of a Republican Government. Future Events, I have learnd by Experience, are uncertain; and some unlucky Circumstance may before long take place, which may prove sadly mortifying to me. But no such Circumstance can deprive me of the Pleasure I now enjoy, of seeing at a Distance (not I beleive very long) the rising



Glories of this new World. Adieu my Friend, and Believe me to be unfeignedly yours,  
S. Adams

[P.S.] The bearer Mr. Allen I think is a good Man. Congress have appointed him Agent to the Indians of Nova Scotia.

RC (MHi) ; FC (NN). RC damaged; missing words supplied from FC.

<sup>1</sup> James Bowdoin's December 18, 1776, letter to John Hancock was read in Congress on January 9, 1777. The next day Congress ordered that "300,000 dollars be sent to Eb Hancock, Esq. the deputy pay master general in the eastern department, for the purpose of paying the bounties and defraying the expences of raising the new levies in that department." PCC, item 65, 1:151-53; *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1285-86; and *JCC*, 7:25, 28.

<sup>2</sup> On February 4, 1777, the Massachusetts General Court did change this authorization to allow "any two or more" of the delegates "being the major part present" to exercise the powers previously vested in three or more delegates. *JCC*, 7:169-70.

<sup>3</sup> The FC reads "Mr. Gerry."

<sup>4</sup> A reference to Joseph Hawley's 1774 "Broken Hints, To be communicated to the Committee of Congress for the Massachusetts," which is in Adams, *Works* (Adams), 9:641-43.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada Jany 16th. 1777

We wrote you yesterday by Colo Grayson,<sup>1</sup> since which the dispatches herewith sent, have come in from Genl. Washington, Genl. Schuyler & Colo Wayne,<sup>2</sup> and we have particular pleasure in seeing General Heath mentioned as moving towards New York, it has been long reported, but now we can depend on it. Colo Hartley who brought this letter from the General, says the Enemy was obliged to burn some of the Houses in Brunswick for want of Fuel and he gives us room to suppose it will not be long before another stroke is struck. The Enemy allow that the movement of our Army from Trenton & the blow at Prince Town, was most excellent Generalship. Mr Morris has a letter from Colo Wood that mentions his & Colo Waynes Regiments being obliged to lye under half Worn out Tents in the severest Cold Weather on the 15th & 16th Decr in so intense Cold, that three of his men & four of Colo Waynes were froze to Death in their Tents & the Ice made Six inches thick in two Nights.

We observe there is not 1000 men fit for duty in that Garrison & their times expired, but as we expect they are relieved or soon will be, by fresh men we beg leave to suggest that our Weakness in that Post might be best covered & they diverted from any attack on us, by our People striking a sudden Blow against them. Albany & all the Country round it is famous for Slays & Sleds and we have no doubt but General Schuyler cou'd with ease collect a sufficient Number to carry 1000, or 1500 Men across the Lakes, with such Stores, Provisions & Artillery as may be necessary, the

quantity of these need not be very considerable because the movement in Slays will be very rapid & the sole object of this expedition shou'd be to burn all the Enemies Vessells in the Lake which we apprehend may be effected with ease & when once done, let them return. The Surprize of the Enemy will prevent their following. We hope this matter may deserve attention & if the plan be adopted some Sea officers might be found here that wou'd be usefull. Congress will excuse us for troubling them with our thoughts, we shoud do it were we with them. We have the pleasure to inform you of the safe arrival of the Sloop Sachem, Capt James Robison, from Martinico, but the letters are not yet come up, so that we know not what stores or advices she brings. You shall be informed soon as possible. The Men of War having been chasing her about the Coast for ten days past, but she slipt in at last & we believe is got into Morris's River from whence we shall order up her Cargo in Waggons. You have herein the Copy of Capt Jones's Acct of his last expedition in the Alfred, he is a fine Fellow and shou'd be constantly kept employed. If the Congress please I will propose to him one or two expeditions & leave him to take his Choice of them. The Enlisting business goes on firmly but we fear the fitting out of Militia will drain all our Magazines & distress us again when the new Army get together, however we have the pleasure to enclose you Copy of a letter from Messr. Abm Livingston & Mr Turnbull two young Gentn sent by the Secret Committee to procure cloathing in the Eastern States, also one from Mr Otis, which are pleasing. The originals we deliver to Mr Mease as the General has appointed him Cloathier General. We have the honor to remain, sir, Your Obedt hble servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> Unless this is a reference to the committee's January 14 letter, the letter in question has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:49.

## Francis Lewis to the New York Convention

Sir

Baltimore 16h Janry. 1777

I was favoured with your letter of the 1st Inst together with sundry resolves of the Honbl the Convention, and their printed Address to their Constituents, all which I have communicated to Congress and they highly approve of your measures.<sup>1</sup>

I am directed by Congress (at their expence) to get a sufficient number of those Addresses reprinted here, in order to be disspersed through this, and the southern States, as also a number to be struck off in the German

language, 300 Copys of the latter to be forwarded to the honbl Convention at Fishkills. As there is no Press with Types for the German language in this Town, I have this day sent one Copy to the Council of safety at Phila. requesting them to get it translated into that language, and when printed to send the first 300 Copys to you, the rest to be dissperſed through that, and the neighbouring States.<sup>2</sup>

Permit me Sir to repeat my sentiments on the necessity of having the State of New York fully represented in Congress, which has not been the case for many months past, and tho' Congress in their collective capacity has ultimately the public good in view, yet such is the depravity of human nature, that partiality will often (and perhaps impreceptably) influence the minds of individuals when the interest of a particular State is immediately concerned.

I have the pleasure to inform you that Congress has seriously considered your late application relative to Cloathing the Troops raising in your State, and they have promised to exert their utmost abillities to effect that necessary business. In September last Congress requested the legislatures of the several States to appoint in their respective States a Commissary for the purpose of purchasing all necessary Cloathing and in November the Secret Committee sent off two Agents (one of them Mr Abm. Livingston) with instructions to confer with those Commissaries in each State, as far eastward as New Hamshire, to assist in the purchasing & procuring said Cloathing, to make returns of the quantity & quality both to Congress & Genl Washington, to be distributed to such Troops as shall be inlisted upon the new establishment but we have not as yet received any advice from those Gentlemen.<sup>3</sup>

On the 12th last month when I left Phila., there was in the hands of Mr. Hayman Levy, purchased by order of your Commissary Mr. Curtenius, shirts, stockings, &c, amounting to upwards of £11000, with orders to send them to Mr VanElvendorph at Esopus, but such was the confusion among the Citizens of Phila. in moveing their Effects, that it was impossible for me to procure Waggons. I therefore obtained a press Warrant from the Council of safety, & delivered it to the Waggon Master Genl., & I have been since informed they were met with upon the Road to Minisynk, should be glad to know If they arived.

I have the honour to subscribe myself, Sir, Your most Obedt Humbl  
Servt,  
Fras Lewis

P.S. On the 15th Capt. Rogers arived here in the Armed Vessell Montgomery belonging to your State, with two Prizes vizt. a Brigt. & Schooner, the former with 3000 bushels salt from Anguilla, the latter with a valuable Cargo of salted Beef, Pork, Hams, Linnens, Woolens, sail Cloth, Cheese, Shoes, spices, Port in hampers, Beer, Pease &c bound from Hallifax for Nw York. The Salt is claimed by a person of this Town as his property, said to be on freight. Upon Capt Rogers's applying to me for advice, I immediately employed a Proctor to file a Libell & prosecute to Condemna-

tion. I have supplied Capt. Rogers with money for his present exigences & shall be glad to receive your instructions for the future Conducting this Affair. I think it advisable to get the Montgomery out again as soon as possible. The Brig. mounts Ten Carriage Guns with Ten men.<sup>4</sup>

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 7, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*; and *JCC*, 7:42. Lewis' letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, dated January 18, is printed below.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 5:821; and Secret Committee to the Massachusetts Council, December 4, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> On February 13 the New York Committee of Safety wrote a letter to the New York delegates, instructing them how to proceed in this case, Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1191.

## Board of War to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen

War Office Jan'y 17th. 1777

I am directed by the Board of War to request you that as soon as you have collected the Returns of Arms & military Stores & have gained as perfect a Knowledge of their Situation as Circumstances will admitt, you will be pleased to write General Washington on the Subject enclosing him Copies of the Returns given into you agreeable to the Letter the Board did themselves the Honour to write you on the 14th Inst. When the General is acquainted with the Distribution of the Arms &c among the Militia passing thro' Philadelphia he will take the proper Steps to prevent the Persons to whom they were furnished from carrying them off as their own Property on their Return from Camp. This is too often practised, & has superadded to the real Want of Arms an artificial Scarcity, & is one among the many & ruinous ill Consequences attendant on the Militia Scheme. Could the Arms be drawn out of the Hands of the Militia & put into those of the regular Troops it would be a great Point gained & this the General when properly informed will be able with his usual Prudence to effect. The Board have been told that there were a great many supernumerary Arms at Camp. This is a Matter well worth enquiring into & you will be pleased to mention it in your Letter to the General.<sup>1</sup>

I am with the greatest Esteem, Your very obed & most hble Servt,

Richard Peters Secy.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147).

<sup>1</sup> In behalf of the Board of War, Peters also wrote letters to the Executive Committee on this date and on January 26, transmitting a total of \$500,000 for the use of the committee—\$300,000 in the first letter and \$200,000 in the second. PCC, item 147, fols. 21, 47. Moreover, on January 30 Peters wrote to the Executive Committee to urge compliance with the Board of War's letters of January 14 and 17. *Ibid.*, fol. 57.



## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 17th. 1777.

The enclosed letter of the General<sup>1</sup> came to our hands about an hour ago, and gives the latest Accounts we have from that quarter. Colo Housicker whom we mentioned in our last in an unfavourable point of light, has just been with us & gives such an acct of the manner in which he was taken & the cause of the Enemies favourable treatment of him as in our opinion wipes off the suspicions that many People had entertained of foul play. He is under parole and says all the Continental officers & Prisoners that are able to walk are coming from New York on parole. We are under an absolute necessity of pressing Congress to send up a large supply of money, the calls on us for payments of various kinds increase every hour, what you sent us has been exhausted long since. We have drawn all that was in the Loan office and are sorry to say it does not flow so freely in there as we expected. Many People that had sums of money by them, sank it into the Country at the time of the late fright & have not brought it back again. Others who are disposed to lend their money to the public say they cannot afford to do it. They live on the interest of their money and so great a reduction as one third of their income when the expence of living is doubled, renders it impossible for them to lodge their money for 4 per Cent. Indeed we find this complaint extends over the Continent and are fearfull the Loan may not be so successfull on that Account. Widdows & Orphans suffer heavily on this occasion. Their money is paid in, they must keep it for opportunities of placing it at 6 per Cent because they cannot subsist on four but were the Interest fixed at 5 per Cent they wou'd still put in their money rather than loose time in waiting for private securities. In short various arguments may be offered in favour of five per Cent being allowed but the most essential one is that 5 per Cent will command the money & we fear four per Cent will not. If an addition must be made, the sooner the better & let it be extended to all the Certificates already Issued or hereafter to be Issued. We are now borrowing on our private Credit to repay the money in a few days, therefore must press for speedy & ample supplies. We are called on by the Genl., by Commissarys, by recruiting officer, Waggon Masters, paymasters & in short are surrounded by claimants of one sort or other and the business must not stop or be starved.<sup>2</sup>

You have enclosed herein the Copies of some letters respecting about 200 Indians from different Nations that want to hold a Treaty at East Town. The assembly of this State, the Council of Safety & Mr. Walton from us are now in Conference on this Subject. We propose that each shou'd send a deputation to the proposed Treaty & if so Mr Walton will go on that service & call in Colo Geo. Taylor of Northampton County one

of our Colleagues to his assistance. We suppose some presents will be wanted & Congress will please to signify soon as possible their pleasure on this Subject both as to Mr Walton & Mr Taylor, & in respect of presents, with any instructions they may think proper. If any such come in time they shall be obeyed. If the Treaty is to be held soon & no orders We shall deem our powers sufficient to Authorize the above proposed deputation with liberty for them to Concur with the assembly & Council of Safety in such measures as may promote Friendship & preserve Peace with the Indians and be most likely to Conduce to the general Welfare of America.<sup>3</sup>

We have the pleasure to inform you that a Brigt Jamaica Packet, Cap Wickes, after running the most imminent risque of being taken by the Roebuck in several attempts to get into our Capes, & passing through a smart fire from her lower Tier, by the Bravery & good Conduct of the Captain has escaped & is got into Chester River in Maryland. This is one of the Vessells that was Stopped in Hamburg by Mr Mathias the British minister there. We dont yet know what her Cargo Consists of but expect it is valueable. She was intended to bring 1000 bbls powder, some Brass Canon & muskets, but are apprehensive it has been the Condition of her releasement that those articles shou'd be taken out of her, & if so she will have Considerable quantities of Ravens & Russia Duck, Oznabrigs, Drillings & other German Goods. The Captain writes that he wou'd take Horse & come up here soon as he had got the Vessell & Cargo safe to Chester & you shall be informed all particulars soon as we know them. No further Account from the Sachem yet. We are now at the morning of the 18th, have received your dispatches by Pluckrose the Express & shall send the Packet to the Genl by the first officer going to Head Quarters. No further news. The Lie of this morning is that New York is retaken but this being a premature report you will wait with patience untill we may be happy to tell you it is true.

On behalf of the Committee, I have the honor to remain, Sir, Your  
Obedt hble servt, Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 14 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:461; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:9-10.

<sup>2</sup> The committee's letter was instrumental in persuading Congress to raise the interest rate on loan office certificates to 6% on February 26. *JCC*, 7:158.

<sup>3</sup> This is the first mention of one of the more obscure episodes in the history of Congress during the period covered by this volume. On January 15 word was sent by the Easton Committee of Safety to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety that five chiefs with 220 members of their tribes—the "Minisink, Chockonit, Shinango, Mohawk, [and] Quykunk"—were on their way to Easton to "renew their former Friendship with this State . . . and . . . to shake hands with the Honorable Congress." Abraham Berlin to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, January 15, 1777, PCC, item 69, 1:323. The Executive Committee forwarded this and other related intelligence to Congress, which on January 24 authorized George Walton

and George Taylor to meet with these Indians at Easton, offer them suitable presents to the value of \$1,000, and signify congressional confidence in their pacific intentions. Walton and Taylor proceeded to Easton, where they arrived on January 29 and met Col. John Bull, whom the Pennsylvania Council of Safety had ordered to act with them. On the following day Walton and Taylor met with the Indians and exceeded their authority by concluding a treaty with them. This action was not well received in Congress. On February 27 the Committee on Indian Affairs, fearful that the treaty might offend the Six Nations and cause them to abandon the neutrality Congress wished them to preserve, reported in favor of disapproving the treaty and sending copies of it to the Commissioners of Indian Affairs in the Northern Department so that they might repair any prospective damage to relations with the Iroquois. Congress ordered this report to be tabled, and there the matter ended. No copy of the offending treaty is known to exist, and letters from Walton and Taylor to Congress describing their proceedings are not in PCC. See *JCC*, 7:62–63, 101, 130, 166; John Bull to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety, January 26, 28, 31, 1777, *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:201, 203, 208; and *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:96.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

Dear Sir.

Baltimore 17th Jany. 1777

I am favored with yours by Majr. Johnston and I should certainly have served him to the utmost of my power in Congress if the appointment you proposed for Mr. Johnston had not now been in another channel. You know Sir that by a late resolve of Congress the General is to fill up all vacancies in the Continental troops that shall happen for six months from the date of the resolve. I have recommended it to the Major to get a letter from you and the council, with one from Colonel Harrison, to the General in his favor, and if he is very intent on success, to carry them himself.<sup>1</sup> I think this will not fail to procure him the commission he desires, and in the meantime the Lieutenants and Ensign may be recruiting the company. We have not heard from General Washington since the 5th instant when he was at Morris Town in West Jersey, about 20 miles from Brunswick where the enemy keep their head quarters. But a Gentleman who arrived here yesterday, and who passed thro our army at Morris Town on the 8th says the men were in high spirits, that he thinks they were 12,000 strong, that they were under marching orders and they were supposed to be going towards Elizabeth Town, which is between the main body of the enemy & New York. That Gen. Heath was to join them on the 9th with between 2 and 5 thousand men. That the Jersey militia had many skirmishes with the British troops and always beat them. That he met large bodies of militia on march to the Jersies, whence he concluded that the enemy must either quit that State soon or be exposed to great danger by remaining there. Unluckily our army consists almost entirely of Militia whose say is very uncertain, and renders the speedy coming up of

regular troops absolutely necessary. I am, with very particular regard and esteem dear Sir your most obedient and most humble Servant,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (OCIWHI).

<sup>1</sup> Washington was already considering George Johnston for a position as one of his aides-de-camp and made the appointment on January 20. See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:487–88, 7:41.

## Executive Committee to Richard Dallam

Sir,

Philada. January 18. 1777

It appears reasonable and just to us that all officers and soldiers in the Continental Service Should be entitled to their Pay while they remain Prisoners in the Hands of the Enemy, and this Pay to continue such a Number of days after their Discharge as may be Sufficient for their return home. And wherever it appears to you from proper Proofs and Testimonials that this has been the Case of any Officers or Soldiers within your department as Paymaster we are of opinion you ought to make good their Pay to the times above mentioned, previously taking care to deduct such sums as they may have already received.

We are yr. Obedt Servts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Addressed: "Richd Dallam Esqr., D[eputy] pay master Genl. to the Flying Camp."

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 18. 1777.

I do myself the Honour to transmit you the enclosed Resolves, by which you will perceive the Steps taken by Congress since my last.<sup>1</sup>

The Affairs of our Country were perhaps never so critical as they seemed to be by your last Accounts which were dated the 11th inst—and yet, some how or other it has happened we have not heard from Philada. since that Time, nor from the General for two or three days before. This Interval, you may suppose, we pass in the greatest Anxiety & Suspense, and wish to be relieved from it in any Manner, rather than be tormented with Doubt, and Uncertainty. I hope therefore, for the future, you will not let us be so long without hearing from you, but will send us an Express, if it is only to inform us, that our Affairs have undergone no Alteration since your last.

I am, with great Respect, Sir, your most obed Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.



19th. Since the foregoing, I have had the Pleasure of receiving your Favour of the 16th and am to request you will pay particular Attention to the Resolves relative to the Horses in the public Stables, and give the Quarter Master Genl. all the Information in your Power on this Subject.<sup>2</sup>

Pray continue to send us Intelligence, if not every day, at least, every other day; and do not let any Idea of the Expence, come in Competition with the Importance of our receiving instant Dispatches.

I am yours &c,

John Hancock Pt.

[P.S.] Please to forward the Letter to Genl. Washington, sent herewith.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock. Addressed: "Robert Morris Esqr & Commee."

<sup>1</sup> "My last" was Hancock's letter to Robert Morris of January 16 in which he had asked Morris to transmit to Governor Livingston of New Jersey and the Pennsylvania Assembly or Council of Safety the President's letter to the states of the 15th. PCC, item 58, fol. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:46-47.

## John Hancock to Andrew Lewis

Sir, Balto. Jany. 18th. 1777.

Your Favour of the 10th inst.<sup>1</sup> was duely recd. & immediately laid before Congress. In Consequence of which I am directed to inform you that it is their opinion your Continuance for the present in Virginia will best promote the Interest of American Liberty. Your Attention to the recruiting Service, and forwarding it as much as lies in your Power, will be a most effectual Means, in the present Situation of Affairs, of serving your Country; and should any Movements of our Enemy threaten to disturb the State of Virginia, you will be ready to act in its Defence.<sup>2</sup>

While the Congress highly approve the Steps you have taken to hasten the March of the Troops, they doubt not your Zeal and Attachment to the Welfare of your Country, will induce you to exert yourself in the same Manner until the whole of the Troops are forwarded.

In the Hurry of sending off the Dispatches, it was not perceived that the Orders for marching the Troops from your State,<sup>3</sup> were directed to the Govr. & Council. Your Attention to this Matter however, & the Measures you have taken on the Occasion, are highly pleasing to Congress. You have their Permission to visit your Family, provided in your opinion, it will not be inconsistent with the public Service.

I have the Honour to be, Sir, your obed. and very hble Servt.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Brigadier Genl. Lewis, Virginia. By Major Johnson."

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 159, fols. 272-73.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:42-43.<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:21.

## John Hancock to the New York Convention

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 18th. 1777.

From the enclosed Resolves, which I have the Honour of transmitting, you will perceive that your Favour of the 28th ulto.<sup>1</sup> was duly received and laid before Congress. In Consequence of which I am directed to inform you, that the Continental Agents in the Middle & Eastern Departments, are ordered immediately to furnish the Commissary of Cloathing, with such Cloathing, or Materials for making them, as may be in their Possession. These, the Congress have empowered Genl. Washington to distribute among the Troops in the Proportion he may think proper, paying at the same Time a particular Regard to the Troops of your State.<sup>2</sup> For which Purpose, I have this day wrote to him, and forwarded a Copy of the Letter from your Honble Body.

For the Sense of Congress on your Exertions in Behalf of the American Cause, I beg Leave to refer you to the enclosed Resolves,<sup>3</sup> & have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: Honble Abraham Ten Broeck Esqr., Presidt. of the Convention of the State of New York."

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 67, 1:402-5, and *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1466-68.<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:41-42.<sup>3</sup> These resolves dealt with the defense of New York and the printing of the convention's address to its constituents. *JCC*, 7:42.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 18th. 1777.

The enclosed Copy of a Letter from the Convention of New York, I am directed by Congress to transmit to you, and to request your Attention to it. The very great Distress of the Troops in that State for Want of Cloathing and Blankets, calls for the most speedy Relief; and the Congress in Order to afford them every Assistance in their Power, have ordered the Continental Agents to furnish the Commissary of Cloathing with an Account of such Cloathes, or Materials for making them, as may be in their Possession.<sup>1</sup> These, it is the Desire of Congress, you will distribute among the Troops in the different Departments, in the Proportion you may think proper; paying, however, a particular Regard to the State of New York, which, from its present unfortunate Situation, is precluded

from all Possibility of procuring those Necessaries for the Troops raised there.

The miserable Condition of our Prisoners at New-York and elsewhere in the Hands of the Enemy, will naturally suggest the Propriety of making the Proposal to Genl. Howe, as soon as convenient, of a Commissary residing among them on Behalf of the United States, agreeably to the enclosed Resolve.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be, with every Sentiment of Respect & Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] The enclosed Copy of a Letter from Genl. Gates, relative to Monsieur Da Lieue,<sup>3</sup> I am directed by Congress to transmit to you, with a Request that you will employ him if you think proper,<sup>4</sup> I have paid him 40 Dolls. to Defray his Expences to you.

(The Copy since inclos'd in a Letter sent by Monsieur De Luce.)

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and part of postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:41-42.

<sup>2</sup> On January 20 Washington suggested to Howe the appointment of Lewis Pintard as such a commissary, but Howe rejected the idea. See *JCC*, 7:41; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:41, 65, 8:191. Washington subsequently appointed Elias Boudinot commissary of prisoners on April 1. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:343.

<sup>3</sup> Gates' January 15 report to the Board of War about Guillaume de Luce is in *PCC*, item 154, 1:131. See also *JCC*, 7:10, 44, 174, 189.

<sup>4</sup> Remainder of MS written by Hancock.

## Francis Lewis to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety

Gentlemen

Baltimore 18th Janry. 1777.

I am directed by Congress, to transmit you the inclosed Copy of an Address from the Convention for the State of New York to their Constituents, which Congress request you would get translated into the German language, get a sufficient number printed, & to forward three hundred Copies of the first struck off, to the Convention for the State of New York *at the Fishkills*, That a part be sent to the Congress in order to be by them dispersed through this State, and the remainder through the State of Pensylvania.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be, Gentlm, Your Most obedt Huml Servt.

Fra. Lewis

RC (PHi). Endorsed in unidentified hand: "Employ Henry Miller for the Translating & printing. 2000 Copies German. Send to Congress—300, to Lancaster—

200, to Berks—200, to York—200, to Philada—300, to New York—300. 1000 English Mr Dunlap.”

<sup>1</sup> See Lewis to the New York Convention, January 16, 1777, note 2.

## Secret Committee to Robert Morris

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 18, 1777

The inclosed resolve <sup>1</sup> of Congress cannot be executed without the books and papers of the Secret Committee. And if the wishes of many Members be gratified, it will be proper to make known what prospects we have of getting the things ordered, and for this purpose what are our prospects of remittance etc. This latter cannot be complied with at present, unless we had the pleasure of your company here. Will you be so kind then Sir, as to order the books here, and when it is convenient for the public, and your private, affairs, we have no doubt but that we shall have your assistance at this place.

We are with regard, Sir, Your most obedient and very humble Servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Fra. Lewis

Wm Whipple

MS not found; reprinted from Burnett, *Letters*, 2:224 (where it is identified as “in the writing of Richard Henry Lee”).

<sup>1</sup> On January 17 Congress ordered the Secret Committee to supply “a list of the articles which they have ordered in consequence of the directions of Congress, distinguishing how much is arrived and what is expected.” *JCC*, 7:45.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

[January 19? 1777] <sup>1</sup>

I laid a Petition from Capt. Campbell before Congress, they declined having any thing to say to it.<sup>2</sup> All persons taken by the Ships of War or privateers of any State, are deemed the prisoners of such State, and are generally applied to the Redemption of their own Subjects; on the Contrary, all persons taken by Continental Vessells are deemed the prisoners of the Congress & subject to their Disposal.

The Georgia Delegates object to the Discharge of the Gentlemen, whose Cases You referred to Congress.<sup>3</sup>

Unless in future all prisoners taken by vessells of our State are detained, such of our People, as fall into the Enemies Hands, cannot be redeemed. This Subject is of Consequence & demands the Attention of your Board.<sup>4</sup>

Yr. obedt. Servt,

Saml. Chase



RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> This letter was undoubtedly written on January 18 or 19. The subject of the letter is the petition of Capt. James Campbell which Chase laid before Congress on January 18. And on the verso of Chase's letter Capt. George Cook wrote a letter on the same general subject to the council dated January 19. See *JCC*, 7:49; and *Md. Archives*, 16:62-63.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; but for Campbell's petition to the Maryland Council of Safety praying for the exchange of his former officers and crew held prisoner by the British at New York, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1003-4.

<sup>3</sup> See William Paca to the Maryland Council of Safety, December 7, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> For the council's January 25 order to Capt. George Cook "to confine all such Prisoners belonging to this State that were taken by the Ship Defence that will not enter into the Service of the State or on Board of some of the private Ships of War," which was apparently issued in response to this letter from Chase, see *Md. Archives*, 16:75.

## Executive Committee to Mark Bird

Sir <sup>1</sup>

January 21st 1777

We have occasion to send four Tons of Nail Rods to Genl Schuyler at Albany for the Continental service<sup>2</sup> and are informed by captain Joy that you can readily Supply us. We therefore request that you will immediately employ Waggons with honest carefull drivers and send away that quantity immediately to Albany writing to Genl. Schuyler that you do it by our direction and that it is for Continental use.

These rods are much wanted there and you will render an essential service to your Country by complying with our request immediately. We will pay the cost to you or your order, whenever you please.

Should you find any difficulty in getting Waggons and it Should become necessary we do hereby Authorize you to empress so many as may be necessary for this Service and if needfull you may call any continental Officer or Troops in the vicinity to your Assistance, they being hereby directed to do in the premisses what is needful to effect this business and this shall be their or your Warrant for so doing, We being fully empowered by Congress to order and conduct all Continental business in this State. But altho we empower you to impress Waggons we would prefer hiring them by agreement with the owners, and you may Assure them of being discharged at Albany, writing to General Schuyler that you have done so and he will comply therewith.

We are Sir, Yr. hble Servts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Addressed: "Colo. Mark Burd."

<sup>1</sup> Mark Bird was the owner of an iron furnace and foundry in Berks County, Pa. He was a colonel of the Berks County militia, chairman of the Berks County Committee, and a delegate to the Pennsylvania Provincial Conference, 1776. *PMHB*, 31:48, 58:312, 326, 328.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:33.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir,

Jany 21st. 1777

You have herein a letter from the General<sup>1</sup> being the only one received from him since our last, but we have daily accounts of Prisoners being made and Stores and baggage being taken in one part or other of the Jerseys. Lt Colo. Flower has produced to us the Generals orders respecting the procuring of the necessaries for an Elaboratory &c and we have promised to Supply him with money and Assistance in every respect should he want it. You'll observe the General thinks of York Town for that purpose. We have sent Mr Hicks the Mason to prepare Stores for Building at Carlisle, but we think a Magazine at each place would be best and should be glad of orders on this point. We have discharged the four bills drawn by Richd. Caswell Esqr. Treasurer of North Carolina, but observing that two of these bills are the Second of the Sett, we return the whole herein to you Sir, that they may be ready in case any demand should be made for payment of the first bills. We enclose you herein an account of John Young for Supplies to Captain Lee's Troop of Virginia Light Horse. The Capt Signs the Receipt of the Articles but not the prices therefore we apprehend the Account should be passed by Congress and when that is done we will pay it if so ordered. We also enclose you an account of Nathl. Donnell's an officer that was sent to Tyconderoga on publick Service which if passed by Congress we will also pay. Colonel Moylan has produced to us the Generals Warrant for 14,000 dollars for the Service of his Regiment. We paid him 3000 Dollars the amount of a former Warrant and have now paid him 1000 dollars here and given him a draft on you in favour Capt David Hopkins for 2000 Dollars which please to pay and this makes 3000 in part of the 14000, we shall pay Colo. Moylan the rest as he wants it, but we must not fail to remind you how much Supplies of money are wanting. Since the above Colo Moylan has applied for 3000 dollars More in Baltimore and we have given him a draft from you for the same being so much more in part of his warrant.

We are Sir, Your hble Serts,

RM

GC

GW

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 17 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:469-70, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:22-23.

## John Hancock to Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Tuesday Evening, Jan. 21, 1777.

Mr. Hancock's compliments to Mr. Purviance, and begs he would be kind enough to send him the price current he mentioned to him, and in-

forms Mr. Purviance that it is the desire of the marine committee that he, with Mr. Stewart, would immediately give the necessary directions for cutting timber, and agreeing with persons for building the two frigates here.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hancock being much engaged in forwarding despatches, prevented his sending him the regular resolution, but he shall have them in the morning.<sup>2</sup>

MS not found; reprinted from Robert Purviance, *A Narrative of Events which occurred in Baltimore Town during the Revolutionary War* (Baltimore: Jos. Robinson, 1849), pp. 209–10.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 6:970.

<sup>2</sup> On the preceding day the Secret Committee sent Samuel and Robert Purviance the following note over the signature of Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lewis, and William Whipple: "Please to deliver Mr Francis Lewis a Member of Congress One pair of Blankets out of the Continental Stores, he to be accountable for the same." Robert Purviance, *Narrative of Events*, p. 209.

## Marine Committee to Esek Hopkins

Sir, In Marine Committee. Baltimore Jany 21t. 1777.

As we are informed that the Enemies Fleet and Army have Orders to leave Rhode Island, if this proves true, you are hereby directed to fit for Sea the Continental Frigates, Warren, and Providence, with all possible Expedition; and order them to proceed, forthwith, to cruise upon the Enemies Ships of War that are now interrupting the Commerce of the United States from the Harbour of New-Port to the Capes of Virginia. And they are to take, burn, sink, or destroy all such of the Enemies Vessels as they shall fall in with. The other Continental armed Vessels, that are in your Port, you will order to proceed to Sea, and do their best Endeavour to intercept Supply Ships that may be coming to the Enemy at New York.

You will please to see that the Wages are duely paid to the Seamen, and that the Prize Money due to them, be paid to them by the Agent as punctually as Circumstances will admit, to prevent Murmers among the Seamen. We have heard some Complaints for Want of Attention to the Seamen, which induces us to mention it to you. We wish to hear from you as often as possible,<sup>1</sup> and are Sir, your hble Servants. By order of Marine Come.

John Hancock Chairman

RC (RHi). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock. Addressed: "To Esek Hopkins Esqr. Commanding the Continental Navy at Providence or Elsewhere."

<sup>1</sup> Hopkins' February 28 reply to this letter is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1319–20.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore 21st Jany 1777

Last Sunday I rec'd your favor of the 26th ulto by Mr Betten. I assure you it was a great rarity—you refer me to several letters which have not come to hand which I suppose is owing to some defect in the Post Office. The postmaster has lately had a rap which I hope will produce good effects. I have obtained an order in favor of the State of New Hampshire for 100,000 but as there are large demands on the Treasury at this time I don't think it possible to send Mr Betten away in less than a week, if so soon.<sup>1</sup> By him I shall send the money you desire. I have rec'd no directions from you to pay Mr Wharton. I enclosed you Capt Smith's receipt for 2700 dollars for the schooner Friend's Adventure—he happened at Philadelphia in a very unlucky season, Congress being then about adjourning to this place and I was so exceedingly engaged in the business of Marine and Secret Committees that I could not pay that attention to Capt Smith that I should otherwise have done, however I hope he arrived with you safe. I wish to be infomed particularly how you go on, both in the Marine and Commercial departments. I was in great hopes you would have had guns from Connecticut for the Raleigh, but you say you have no prospect of them. No answer has been received from Governor Trumbull on that subject though I have long expected it. I am doing every thing in my power to procure them here and if my endeavors had not been so often baffled should think I had a fair prospect of success. I hope you are going on with preparations for the 74. Our removal hither has disconcerted matters, so that I have not been able to procure the dimensions but expect them from Philadelphia every day. In the mean time I hope the timber will be Procured and every other necessary that you can collect and I hope by the time this reaches you the vessels I mentioned in some of former letters will be on their passage here for iron &c.

We are in hourly expectation of some interesting intelligence from the army; by the last advices they had nearly surrounded Brunswick where the enemy were confined to a very small compass and much distressed for fuel and forage; it is also reported that Howe has ordered his troops from Rhode Island. It's said Cornwallis was going to carry the intelligence of the ravages they had made to the Tyrant and actually had his baggage on board when the news of the surprize of Trenton arrived at York. This and what has happened since puts a very different complexion on their affairs and I suppose will stop their Herald. Excuse this scrawl as I am in very great haste, yours &c,

Wm Whipple

[P.S.] I shall write by Betten.

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Congress appropriated \$100,000 for New Hampshire on January 20, in response to Meshech Weare's letters of December 16 and 27, 1776, to President Hancock



requesting money to purchase supplies and pay bounties. *JCC*, 7:50; *PCC*, item 64, fol. 24; and *N.H. State Papers*, 8:420, 439–40. For the actual delivery of the money, see Hancock to James Betton et al., February 11, 1777.

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear

Baltimore 21<sup>t</sup> Janry 1777

Since my last of the 14<sup>t</sup> nothing Material has Occurred. I have still to acknowledge the Goodness of God in continuing the Health to me which I enjoy, and it would be a great Satisfaction to me to know that you and the Family were well, but I have heard nothing particularly from you since Mr Lymans Letter of the 21 Novr. The Reason of which I am sensible can be owing to no other Cause than the Distance and uncertainty of Conveyance. My Situation gives me the Knowledge of many Oppertunities of Writing which you have not, Almost every one of which I embrace not only as I take a Pleasure in Writing to you, but I well know that you wish frequently to hear from me. You are more especially intituled to a Letter of this Date, as it is an important Anniversary in Our Lives, which cannot fail of producing in Me the most agreeable Recollection. My distant Situation does not diminish my Regard for you and my Family. I feel the Warmest Wishes for your Welfare, and hope that it will please God to bestow upon you and our Children every Blessing. I am not able to give you the least Advice in the Conduct of any Business, your own Prudence in the Direction of it I have no dought of. I can only Wish that the cares which must oppress you were less, but if the present Troubles shall terminate in the future Peace and Security of this Country (which I trust will be the Case) the present Evils and Inconveniences of Life ought to be borne with Cheerfullness. I fear that by Reason of the scarcity of many Articles in Connecticut, you find a Difficulty in supplying the Family with some Things which may be Wanted, but I trust the Essentials of Life you are provided with, and I wish that you may not Want any of the Conveniences of it. Every thing in this Place bears a most enormous Price, I beleive fifty perCent at least higher than in Philadelphia. The Expence of any kind of living here is truly surprizing—but the present scarcity and high Price I hope will be but temporary, and will finally be productive of solid Advantage.

We have nothing of Consequence from the Jersys since my last, except Account of our People frequently bringing in small Partys of the Enemy. Our last Acco. is that the Enemy are at Brunswick suffering much for Want of Forage, Fuel &c. Their Situation and that of our Army renders it highly probable that We shall Very soon hear some interesting News from that Quarter, but you are and probably will be sooner informed of this eastern News than can be transmitted to you by me.

My kindest Love to my Children and Freinds and be assured that I am  
yours with the tenderest affection,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtHi).

## Board of War to Charles Thomson

Sir,

War Office 22d Jany. 1777.

Colonel Frank Lee informs me that to the best of his remembrance the Congress on receiving General Lee's Letter with respect to Coll. Muhlberg's Regt., entd. into a Resolve that the Officers of that Regt. shou'd take Rank from the day they marched out of the Province.<sup>1</sup> As I am about writing to the Colonel I shou'd be glad you wou'd inform me, and if possible send me a Copy of the Resolve.

I am sir, with the greatest Respect, Yr. most obt. Serv.

Joseph Nourse, 1s. Clerk, Bd. war

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147).

<sup>1</sup>In a letter to the Board of War written on August 2, 1776, Gen. Charles Lee had discussed the complaints of Col. Peter Muhlenberg about reports that his Eighth Virginia Battalion would not be accepted into Continental service until it was up to full strength. Congress read Lee's letter on August 29, but, contrary to Francis Lightfoot Lee's recollection of events, Muhlenberg's unit had already been taken into Continental service on August 16. *JCC*, 5:649, 716; and *NYHS Collections* 5 (1872): 183-84, 187-93.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir,

Philada. Jany 22d. 1777

We have just received the enclosed letters from the General.<sup>1</sup> They came to hand within half an hour of one another. On this occasion we cannot help expressing how sorry we are to observe the weak state of his Army and as Genl. Putnam most certainly has a large Body of Men at Prince Town, it leaves us in doubt whether a proper communication of intelligence be kept up between them or not. Capt Jno Nicholson left Genl Putnam on Monday & says he has not less than 6000 Men with him, more or less are sent off from hence every day, here are 3000 in this City now and Genl Gates & Ld Stirling propose marching with them tomorrow or next day soon as they can be fixed with arms & blankets which are much wanted. There are Muskets in this State but they all want repairs & nobody is left to do it, therefore if the City Militia come back it will be a general benefit to the service. The General in his letter to us<sup>2</sup> recommends the removing of the Public Stores which is attended with great loss,

Waste & expence and as there certainly are or will be 10,000 Men in arms between us & the Enemy, we are very unwilling to incur the expence, waste & loss that will arise by a removal of the Stores, at the same time our situation becomes very disagreeable if we leave them here & an accident happens after the General has recommended that measure. Wherefore We request of Congress to give us their orders, or if they shou'd not choose to be peremptory, their opinion on this point. Our desire is to serve the Public & steer clear of Censure.<sup>3</sup>

We are teased to Death for Money and keep collecting & retailing it out, so as to prevent a Stoppage in the business of the various departments that now call on us.

You have also herewith dispatches from Govr. Trumbull & We remain with the utmost respect, sir, Your Obedt Servants, Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup>For Washington's January 19 and 20 letters to President Hancock, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:29-30, 39-40.

<sup>2</sup>See *ibid.*, 7:32.

<sup>3</sup>On January 28 Congress decided that for the time being there was no need to move the public stores out of Philadelphia. *JCC*, 7:66.

## John Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Jany. 22d. 1777.

I have it in Charge from Congress most earnestly to request, that you will immediately appoint Subaltern Officers for the several Companies which are now raising in your State, in Consequence of your Orders, that the recruiting Service may be expedited as fast as possible, and the Men when raised be properly trained.<sup>1</sup>

The enclosed Resolve, recommending it to you to call forth the Militia from the Counties therein mentioned, and such others as you shall think proper, to reinforce Genl. Washington at this critical Period, I am to request you will immediately comply with, agreeably to the Terms of the same.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Sert.

John Hancock Presidt.

RC (MdAA). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup>See *JCC*, 7:53.

<sup>2</sup>See *JCC*, 7:53-54. For the council's response to the two requests contained in this letter, see *Md. Archives*, 16:79.

## Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence

Gentn

Philada. Jany 22d. 1777

The Sachem after going up the Bay & meeting with Ice went down to Cape May from whence the enclosed packet was sent to me by express. I had before recd an Acct. of the Piratical Conduct of Capt Patterson.<sup>1</sup> Such things ought to be taken in time or we shall acquire a similar character to the Inhabitants of Barbary. I hope you will urge Spirited Measures on this Occasion & it will lay the foundation for Calling some other delinquents to a severe Account. I am extreemly hurried but always your most obed servt,

Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Addressed: "To The Honble Benjn. Harrison Esqr. Chair Man of Commee of Correspondence Baltimore."

<sup>1</sup> Morris enclosed William Bingham's December 6, 1776, letter with supporting documentation alleging piracy against Capt. William Patterson of Maryland. For the subsequent responses of Congress and Maryland, see Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety, January 29 and February 6; and Committee of Secret Correspondence to William Bingham, February 1, 1777, note.

## George Walton to George Washington

Sir,

Philadelphia, 22d January, 1777

Mr Randolph, who came last night from some expedition towards Black-point, informs me, that, at different times within these few days, he saw three several persons who were directly out of New-York; and who all agreed in this, That there were but very few troops in the city, and that patrol duty was performed by the inhabitants in rotation; That there have been many secret movements in the night-time of stores and heavy artillery, and that, on Tuesday last six heavy peices of Artillery were carried from New-York over to Staten Island down opposite to Perth-Amboy. These, no doubt, are intended to cover a Retreat that way, if they should be necessitated to make one.

I have not troubled your Excellency with this trifling intelligence with any view of its being materially useful to you: but as good information in war is as the optics of man, the most trifling may sometimes be of advantage.

I wish you health, and am, with great respect, Sir, Your Most Obedient Servant,

Geo Walton

RC (DLC).



## Board of War to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen, War Office Baltimore January 23d. 1777

As the Secretary is out of Town I am directed by the Board of War to acquaint you, that the Congress to prevent the abuses that have been too much practis'd by Gunsmiths & others employ'd on the public Arms, have thought proper to appoint Mr. Thos. Butler Public Armourer, who is not only to superintend the repairing and proving of all the public Arms, but likewise to see that no more than a just value is paid the Workmen, that every imposition on the public may for the future be effectually stop'd. In a few days he will wait on your Honourable Board to begin the execution of his Office, and repair such of the public Arms at Philada. as are defective. The Instructions he receives at this Board he will receive Orders to lay before you.

I am directed, Gentlemen, to request you will be equally particular with regard to the delivery of Blankets, as of Arms to the Militia passing thro' Philadelphia on which subject I beg leave to refer you to the Letter the Board wrote you the 17th Inst.

I am, Gentn. with the greatest Respect, Your most obt. humble servant, By Order of the Board of War,

Joseph Nourse, Clerk to the Board

[P.S.] The Board beg you'll forward the Inclosed for His Exc. General Washington by the 1s safe opportunity.<sup>1</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147).

<sup>1</sup>On this day the Board of War also wrote a letter to Washington signed by Nourse, enclosing extracts from General Schuyler's January 7 letter to President Hancock describing the need for reinforcements at Ticonderoga.

## Samuel Chase to the New Jersey Council

Gentlemen Baltimore Town January 23rd. 1777.

The Committee appointed by the enclosed Resolution of Congress, request your Honorable Board to appoint some Gentlemen of your State<sup>1</sup> to enquire into, and take Depositions of credible Witnesses on the several Matters contained in the Resolve, and to direct them to transmit the Testimony, as taken, to the Committee, that they may report to Congress as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup>

The Committee have also to request that you would send to them an authenticated Copy of General Howes Orders to Colonel Rohl.

The Committee have been informed that some of the Prisoners of the 17th and 55 Regiments, taken at Prince Town, have said that their Major had given them Orders "to stand 'till they were cut to Pieces, and to take no Prisoners." It is reported here that several of our officers were shot

or stabbed with the Bayonet, after they had surrendered: General Mercer and Lieutenant Yeates are mentioned among that Number. It is also said that several Bodies have been found in the Jersies, hanging on Trees.

I am, Gentlemen, with great Respect, Your Most Obedt. Servant,  
Saml. Chase

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> Committee chairman Chase apparently sent the same letter, without the second paragraph, to the New York Convention and to General Washington. Emmet Collection, NN; and Sparks Collection, MH-H. Although Burnett concluded that the latter document was directed to Gov. William Livingston of New Jersey, it seems more likely that it went to Washington, since the other two letters requested appointment of gentlemen "of your State" rather than "of the State of New Jersey" as specified in this document in the Sparks Collection. See Burnett, *Letters*, 2:225.

<sup>2</sup> For the committee appointed on January 16 to enquire into British and Hessian treatment of prisoners of war and citizens of the states of New Jersey and New York during the recent campaign, see *JCC*, 7:42-43. The work of the committee went slowly, and not until April 18 did it finally submit its report, a powerful condemnation of enemy "barbarity and cruelty." At that time Congress ordered it to be published, but it was not until April 24 that the first of four installments of the report was printed in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*. On July 19 another resolution was adopted calling for its publication, with supporting affidavits, in a pamphlet edition of 4,000 copies in English and 2,000 in German, but no copy of the work is known. See *JCC*, 7:124, 276-79, 8:565, 9:1085; and John Adams to Abigail Adams, April 27, 1777, note 1.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir,

Philadelphia, 23d January, 1777.

The enclosed letter from the paymaster General, with a copy and extract of letters from his Deputies, came to hand this morning, which agreeable to his request, we send forward by express. Congress must certainly be fully convinced of the necessity of keeping the military chests constantly and amply supplied; and that a neglect of it may be productive of the most ruinous consequences.<sup>1</sup> We therefore would submit it, whether this matter should not command the attention of Congress in preference to any other. Besides the exhausted chests in the military department, the empty fund at this place must be attended to. Though we are hopeful, after a while, that the Loan-Office in this state will keep it in a tolerable credit.

General Mifflin arrived here last night, and informs of a Skirmish which happened two days ago between a foraging party of the enemy about a thousand in number, and a less number of our Militia, in which the latter were successful; having killed about 20, and taken double that number prisoners; together with a number of English waggons and horses, and a large quantity of provisions which they had ravaged.

Generals Gates and Lord Stirling set out this morning, with the remainder of the Virginia Light Horse, to the Camp at Morris-Town.

We have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient Servants.

[P.S.] Since writing the above the enclosed letter from Mr Harrison, the Genls Aid du Camp, was recd by Mr Morris, & we have advised that Ld Stirling depart this morning & Genl Gates remain to arrange & forward the militia through this place. The Muskets, Blankets &c being almost exhausted it is a business of much difficulty to move the militia forward from hence as they expected to be equipped compleatly. Genl Mifflin will have abundant employment in his own department & cannot be taken off, as Commanding Officer without doing much injury to the service. He Calls on us loudly for money & large Sums he must have, the recruiting service is every hour calling for money & it is our constant study to work from hand to Mouth by giving each applicant a little & promising him more speedily. We find by Genl Mifflin that Capt Nicholson does not Count Numbers well, Genl Putnams force being far short of what he said it was, however we still think the Public Stores need not be moved, but wish your orders on that head.<sup>2</sup>

A report is just come that we have taken New York. If it proves true you shall soon have another express & in great haste, We Remain Sir, Your Obedt Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

P.S. Herewith Sundry letters & dispatches from the Eastwd & Norwd.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Walton and signed by Walton, Clymer, and Morris, with postscript by Morris.

<sup>1</sup> On January 30 Congress ordered the payment of \$300,000 to Deputy Paymaster Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. *JCC*, 7:75.

<sup>2</sup> This day the Executive Committee also wrote a letter to Michael Hillegas, the Continental treasurer, ordering him to pay £700 to Constant Cooper. PCC, item 133, fol. 67.

## Robert Morris to John Bradford

Dear Sir

Philada. Jan'y 23d. 1777

The enclosed letter is of very great Consequence to the Public and ought to reach France soon as possible.<sup>1</sup> At the same time we must guard most carefully against its falling into the hands of our Enemies, and I beg you will seek for a good Conveyance to any part of France or Spain, and enjoin the Captain or Person with whom you entrust it, to have it Slung ready, & let it be thrown overboard rather than any Enemy shou'd get it.

And if it goes to Nantes, enclose it under Cover to Messrs. Pliarne, Penet & Co. tell them to open the Cover directed to Messrs Delap (for that is only a Cover) & then forward the letter they will find enclosed immediately to Paris agreeable to the direction. At Havre de Grace Mr. Andw Limozin will do the same, & so may Messrs Jos. Gardoqui & Sons at Bilbao but it may not be safe to trust any others with this Secret unless it goes to a place where You can depend on the Fidelity of some good Friend of Well known attachment to our cause. I am sure you will do the needfull & remain with sincere esteem Dr sir, Your Obedt hble servt,  
Robt Morris

RC (DLC). Endorsed: "Hon. Robt. Morris Esqr, January 23rd Respecting Sending a duplicate to France."

<sup>1</sup> The identity of this letter has not been determined.

### Robert Morris to John Hancock

My Dear Sir                      Philada. Jany 23d. 8 oClock in the Evening, 1777.

I am ashamed to find myself in your debt for two such very Friendly letters as those you have honoured me with of the 14th & 19th Inst.<sup>1</sup> but I declare to you it is not in my power to keep pace with the Number of Correspondents I am now engaged with, taking into View Public & private business as well those more valueable & pleasing letters that pass between the Hearts that find relief in a free & Candid communication of Sentiments not confined to the wickedness, Follies, [. . .], Virtues or Vices of this World but wantonly taking a Survey of the whole and either treating of them or passing them by as the humour of the scribbling hour may be. Thank God, I pursue business of every sort not as the sole pleasure of my life, but as one of those material dutys that affords a lively pleasure in the Consciousness of discharging that duty and if I am not much mistaken my good Friend it is the same Idea that Induces you to sacrifice a great deal of precious time to the official parts of your Station least any charge of neglect or inattention shou'd ever lie at your door. I have sometimes blamed you for too scrupulous an attention in this Stile, yet when I consider these are the days of exertion its probable you may be right & myself wrong, therefore I believe it is best for every man to go on in his own way provided he pursues proper objects, this I am sure is the case with you & I flatter myself with being in the same line, If promoting the real good & solid Interests of our Country can entitle us to that Character.

I accept with great satisfaction every proffer of your Friendship & attention, your letters give me real pleasure, & unreserved intercourse is my delight and if ever the grounds of a Commercial Connection can be formed between us it shall be my ambition to promote your Interest or,



if you please, as the mercantile phrase is, our mutual advantage. Thus, then our correspondance is fairly started on the most liberal foundation and we may when absent inform, instruct or amuse each other as the magot bites, sure of every thing being taken in good parts. When present we have all the dispositions in the World to do the same things, but sometimes you know human frailties will predominate & then the best disposition & clearest understanding must give way for the moment Untill recollection takes place of passion & temper. When in fact we grow sensible of the error, and being convinced this is only the weak side of Human Nature, we are not much displeased with our friends or ourselves for discovering the Face of Clay. You make me exceeding happy as you may readily suppose by your approbation of my Conduct in Public business and I candidly assure you I saw the necessity of the times put a good face on all things & believe in the day of Tryal I have the good fortune to revive many drooping Spirits, at least the People here tell me so & some from Baltimore assure me of the same thing. I wish much to see my family. I want to see the Congress & some of the Committees I find want me, therefore I must come soon, but not till something is done in Jersey to put a fixed Complection to the Campaigne, the Generals now here say I must not depart & General Washington says I must stay, therefore it must be so, for a while at least, but when I do come I think I shall not bring Mrs. Morris to Baltimore. She is comfortably settled & that is not to be expected where you are, sorry I am that you have any Complaints on this score. We must have you up here again by & by. Mrs. Hancock, Miss Quincy & the little Philadelphian must not be fugitives in so uncomfortable a place if we can once assure them of peace, plenty & protection here, and I flatter myself that will soon be the case, but I shall not urge the return of Congress for the reasons you assign, sooner than they can move with Convenience. How comes it that you are so exceedingly greedy after News and discover so much impatience when we are silent. Have we ever failed one moment in telling you any thing that happened either good or bad after we cou'd clearly ascertain it. Have we not told you to be easy that you shou'd have information fast as we got it, but still this won't do. We must send to tell you nothing has happened. Why it is impossible to do that, you must be sure that is the case when you dont hear from us & not mind the Cursed lies that are eternally hatching in every mile of distance between Head Quarters & Congress. Was we to write you all the lies of the day we cou'd do nothing else.

I shewed Mease the paragraph respecting him & if he dont tell you how to address him write to Mr. James Mease Master Taylor of America & he will Correct the error if any there be. We dont go to the Oyster House for there is no Oysters, thanks to King Georges ships & the Ice, but I pay my devotions at the Hills most religiously every Sunday with Nesbit, Bache, Mease, Walton, Clymer &c &c &c &c. Here are not any Sperm

Candles in this City, but Mustard you shall have. I must either stop or get another Sheet, inclination says do, but time says no. Adieu. I am Yours etc.

Robt Morris

RC (PPIIn).

<sup>1</sup> Only Hancock's letter to Morris of January 14 has been found.

## Robert Morris to Nathaniel Shaw, Jr.

Sir,

Philada. Jany. 23. 1777

I take the liberty to enclose herein a copy of a letter from my friends Messrs Hewes & Smith of Edenton in North Carolina wrote from Hallifax in that State the 13th ulto by which you will see they have most unjustly been plundered of a part of their property on the High Seas, the only ostensible reason offered by the privateer or rather piratical Captain is that they are Tories, a most villainous assertion made to cover the baseness of the Asserters Conduct.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Hewes is a member of Congress, and has been so from the first—a warm & steady Friend to America, a zealous and steady Supporter of its interests & Independence, his partner Mr. Smith is a man of merit equally attached to the liberties of his Country, tho' not so much employed in public Councils. Perhaps if we do not begin in time, and bring such offenders to Justice, we may bid adieu to all security of property, for we shall have no leisure for other employments than a search after retaliation. Mr. Hewes is still in No. Carolina, but soon expected back to Congress, where he will represent this matter fully. In the mean time I hope you will keep a look out in all the ports of your state for his vessel and if found put in a claim, Commence an action against the Privateer & do every thing necessary to support both one & the other, informing Mr. Hewes or me soon as possible and all things necessary to support you therein shall be complied with.

I am Sir, Your obt hbl servant,

Robt. Morris.

MS not found; reprinted from *The Historical Magazine, and Notes and Queries, concerning the Antiquities, History and Biography of America* 10 (1866): 301–2.

<sup>1</sup> See William Hooper to Joseph Hewes, January 1, 1777, note 1.

## Matthew Thornton to Meshech Weare

Hond. sir,

Baltimore, 23d, Jany. 1777.

Octr. 15th left Home, & Experianced the truth of the following lines, Soon Varying nature Shifteth every Scene, rash ways, Succeed the Smooth, Storms the Seren[e], &c. Ariv'd at Philadelphia the 3d of Novr., the 8th were innoculated for the Small Pox, & during our Confinement,

we had the Honour to be attended by Doctr. Cash, Dr. Surly, Dr. Critical Observer, Dr. Gay and Dr. Experiance, in the following order (viz) Between the hours of 10 & 11, A.M. Dr. Cash, how is't Sir, & Madm. & whatever our Complaints ware, his Answer was, all's prity, & Vanished in a Second. He was the Operator, & for a few days Visited us, as Above, & we See no more of him, till I paid his Bill of 18 Dollars. Dr. Surly Came two or three times, each day, as a friend, View'd us thro' his Glasses, & then with a Smiling Grin, Softly said, what no worse yet, this is but triffling to what you'll feal befor all's Over. Dr. Critical Observer, a young Doctr. that told me he would Critically Observe every Stage of the Small Pox in us, to gain Experience, & Came once in two or three days, & Staid about a minit each time. Dr. Gay, a young Dr. that Came as a friend two or three times every day trip'd round, Song a tune, & told us all would end well. Dr. Experience, a Merchant who has had the Small Pox, Visited us every day, & gave a much trewer account of the Small Pox, then all the Doctrs. Soon after we Got abroad, the news of Hows army, on their march for Philadelphia, indus'd the Congress to Adjourn to this Town, where the man with Boots has very great Advantage of a man with Shoes, the Carriages are Stopped by the Depth of the mire in the middle of the Street & the Ladies, with silkd Gowns, & Shoes make a fine figure. From we left Home the Prayers, & Graces becam Shorter every Stage, untill we hear neither, the Religion is, take all advantage, pay your Debt, & do as you please.

By the assistance of my Worthy College, & Good friends, we Obtain'd a Grant of 100000 Dollars, which we Send per the bearer, & are Obliged to Detain him till the Massachusetts Money, &c is ready.<sup>1</sup> Pray Sir, take the trouble to present my Compliment, & thanks, to the Honorable Council & House, for the late unmerited additional Honor, of begining my appointment the 23d of Jany. & inform them, that my Constitution & Circumstances Obliges me Humbly to ask leave to return Home next Spring, the Necessaty of having Good men, in Congress, is so Evident, that I Shall only beg they may be Sent in time. For Publick news I must refer you to the Bearer, the Congress are doing all in their Power, to procure Assistance, Foreign & Domastick. May God give Success, Wisdom to the Councils, & Success to the arms of America is the prayer, & Constant desier, of Sir, your Most Obedient, Hble sert.

Matthew Thornton

P.S. Novr. 20th 1776 The Congress Resolved that there be immediately Undertaken in New-Hampshire, one Ship of 74 Guns. One Do in Massachusetts-Bay 74 Do., & one Do. of 36 Do. in Do. In Pennsylvania, one Do. 74 Do., one Frigate of 18 Do. & a packet Boat. In Virginia, 2 Frigates of 36 Do. Each. In Maryland, 2 Do. of 36 Do. Each.<sup>2</sup>

23d Jany. 1777. Resolved that there immediately Built in Connecticut one Frigate of 36 guns, & one Do. of 28 Do.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DLC). Addressed: "To The Honble. Meshech Weare Esqr., Prest. of The Honble. Council In the State of New-Hampre., per favour of James Betten, Esqr."

<sup>1</sup> For further information on the grant of \$100,000, see William Whipple to John Langdon, January 21, 1777, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 6:970.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:58.

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 24th. 1777. 9 O'Clock. P.M.

I have the Honour to transmit you the enclosed Resolves, and am to request your Attention to them. You will perceive they relate to a Variety of Subjects, and are absolutely necessary for your Information.

The Congress have come to a Determination to hold a Conference with the Indians at Easton agreeably to their Desire, and have ordered a thousand Dollars to be lodged in the Hands of Mr. Walton or Mr. Taylor for the Purpose of procuring Presents for them. The Resolve of Congress on this Subject, herewith transmitted, contains Directions for the Conduct of the Gentlemen in transacting this Business.<sup>1</sup>

Your Favour of the 22d accompanied with sundry Papers, and a Letter from the General was delivered to me this Afternoon about four O'Clock, and shall be laid before Congress as soon as possible.

Mr. Butler, the Armourer, sets out for your City tomorrow, and is highly recommended for his Skill in his Business.

I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most obedt. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:63; and Executive Committee to Hancock, January 17, 1777, note 2.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 24th. 1777.

Since my last of the 18th, the Congress have come to the enclosed Resolves, which I do myself the Honour of transmitting for your Information and Direction.<sup>1</sup> They are so explicit as to require no Comment or Illustration. I have wrote, in Obedience to the Order of Congress, to the Council of Safety of this State, to request them to call forth immediately the Militia of the Counties of Cecil, Harford, Baltimore, and such other Counties as they may think proper, to join your Army, and I have no Doubt of their immediate Compliance therewith.<sup>2</sup>

Your Favours of the 19 & 20th inst. I was honored with this Afternoon at four O'Clock, and shall lay them before Congress as early as possible,



when the greatest Attention will undoubtedly be paid to their important Contents.<sup>3</sup> I have the Honour to be, with Sentiments of the most perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Hancock sent Washington several resolves on military affairs passed between January 21 and 24. *JCC*, 7:52–55, 58, 61–62.

<sup>2</sup> See Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety, January 22, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> These letters are in PCC, item 152, 3:473–75, 485–86, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:29–30, 39–40.

## Marine Committee to Robert Morris

Sir, Baltimore Jany. 24th. 1777.

The Marine Committee, judging it of the utmost Consequence, that the Frigate Virginia should be got to Sea as soon as possible, and finding it impracticable to procure here the necessary Articles for the Ship, without which she cannot proceed to Sea, have determined to send to Philada. for them; and have sent the Bearer, an Officer of Captain Nicholson's, to expedite the Business. And I am now in the Name of the Marine Committee to request, you will immediately order such of the Articles as are mentioned in the enclosed Memo.<sup>1</sup> and can readily be got in Philada. to be forwarded here without Loss of Time, in such Manner as you shall judge best. The Bearer will afford every Aid in his Power.

I should think that it would be no Disservice in taking an Anchor & the Cables from one of the Frigates in Philada. as you can with more Ease replace them there, than we can procure them here; and all your frigates are not in the Readiness the Virginia is, and indeed she waits only for these Articles. I submit it to you to conduct as you think most for the public Service, but with Respect to the Anchor, Cables & Rigging, it is of the utmost Importance they should be sent. Two Carts put together would easily affect this, let the Expence be ever so great—but Care should be taken to prevent the Cables from chaffing by matting the Turns, or putting Canvas round the Parts liable to rub against the Waggon. But I need not give *you* any Hints of this Kind. I wish we may have as many of the Articles as can be got, and I know you will exert yourself to effect this Business.

I am, in Behalf of the Marine Committee, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Chairman

[P.S.] The Inclos'd Letter to Commodore Hopkins,<sup>2</sup> I leave open for your perusal; please to Seal & forward by first good Oppory.

RC (MdAN). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See Marine Committee to Esek Hopkins, January 21, 1777.

## Robert Morris to William Hooper

Pha Jany 24th 1777.

In all the Transactions of America nothing has given me more Concern than that kind of irregular Conduct on bd the Am. Privateers that savours more of Moorish Piracy than Christian Forbearance. We have already many Instances that ought to be reprobated and the perpetrators brot to a Conding Punishment if the United States of America means to preserve a National good Character.

One I have ment[ione]d to the Committee of Secret Correspondence because there was an open violation of the Laws of Nations and a palpable Insult on our real or pretended good Friends the French.<sup>1</sup> Others have happened in Violation of the Authority of Congress and the Ships & Cargoes belonging to the States of America have been seized on Frivolous pretences and sent into their own Ports, those Insults have been overlooked because the States have probably not suffered any great Loss as the Property has reverted to them & the Captors have been supposed to act from good Motives &c but what shall we say for these Plunderers when Individuals, honest Industrious Men, Friends to the Freedom & Independence of America lose their Property Credit & reputation by these Depredations, & the Misrepresentations they make to Cover their own Villainies, indeed my good friend if we do not take some effectual measures to punish the guilty and put a Stop to this kind of Arbitrary Thieving we shall be Sharers in their Guilt and probably incur the suspicion of being Sharers in the Plunder.

I am led into these remarks by a letter from our Friend Hewes who has had two Vessells taken on the high Seas by Am. Privateers on no better pretence than the Captains pretending the Owners were Tories, the last of them is particularly ment[ione]d and described by Mess. Hewes & Smith in their letter to me of the 13 Decr a copy of which is enclosed, and when Congress have leisure I wish you would propose some Salutary Measures to put a Stop to these Growing Evils.<sup>2</sup> I think the Captains & owners of Privateers shd give Security in very large Sums, and every State be answerable to those who grant Com[mission]s to, this wod make the latter cautious & villains wod find it difficult to deceive them, something I am sure must be done unless we wish to plunder one another & lay all the World under Contribution as a lawless Set of Freebooters, which God forbid shd ever be the Characteristicks of the Country I love.

MS not found; reprinted from extract in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1031–32.

<sup>1</sup> For the case of Capt. William Patterson alluded to here, see Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, January 22, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> For the incident involving the capture of Hewes & Smith's brig *Joseph*, see William Hooper to Joseph Hewes, January 1, 1777, note 1.

## Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush

My dear Julia,

Baltimore Jany. 24. 1777.

I had rode but a few miles before the badness of the roads, the difficulty of the ferry, and the lazyness of Diamond convinced me that you had acted very wisely in determining not to accompany me to Baltimore. But upon my arrival here I was thankful that you did not share with me in the trouble I met with in procuring tollerable lodgings. At present I am accommodated in a room lately occupied by Mr Sergeant which I must abandon as soon as he returns which will be in a few days. The rain which fell yesterday has rendered the Streets so very muddy that they are impassible to women. No ladies are seen abroad but in carriages. It will be eno' of the expence of living here to tell you that Mr. Middleton After keeping his family at a tavern for a while at the rate of £100.0.0 a week was obliged for want of agreeable accommodations to send them to Annapolis thirty miles from this place. I have been told since my arrival here that our Assembly intend to leave me out in the next appointment of delegates as a punishment for opposing their new government.<sup>1</sup> Welcome this storm of popular rage! I shall kiss the rod that Smites. I never was so weary of public life, & never languished more for the Sweets of domestic life than since I parted last from you. You wished me a great deal of pleasure and frolicking at Baltimore when you bid me farewell. Alas! my heart sickens at the sound of what is commonly called pleasure. In this State of banishment from *home & you*, the music of Coralli would serve only to encrease my melancholly. To exchange a *whole* house for a *single* room, to *request* instead of *commanding* when the most trifling favor is wanted, and above all to give up a most affectionate wife for the society of strangers. To lay aside freedom, ease, and unbounded confidence in conversation for constant restraint, and formality, are circumstances that illy agree with a man of my age & disposition.

My brother<sup>2</sup> lodges in a tavern and perfectly harmonizes with me in complaining of Baltimore. My next letter I hope will be written in a better humor, and contain an agreeable acct. of the people to make up for the badness of the place. They are said to be very kind to strangers.

Adieu my dear girl. Much love to Mrs. Montgomery & the family. Leave your letters to me at Dowdle's tavern at Christiana bridge and they will come safely by the post. Yours—yours—my dear Julia.

RC (MdHi: Middendorf deposit, 1972).

<sup>1</sup> On February 5, 1777, the Pennsylvania Assembly named Benjamin Franklin, William Moore, Robert Morris, Daniel Roberdeau, and Jonathan Bayard Smith to represent the state in Congress, only Franklin and Morris being reappointed from the previous delegation. Because Franklin was in France and Morris had remained at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania would soon be unrepresented in Congress, as only Rush and James Wilson had been attending at Baltimore. The Assembly's aim is not clear, but when Moore declined to serve, pressure to enlarge the delegation increased, and George Clymer and James Wilson were reappointed to new terms on February 22. See *Journals and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Common-Wealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: John Dunlap, 1777), pp. 21, 22, 27, 30.

<sup>2</sup> Jacob Rush.

## Board of War to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen,

War Office Baltimore 25t January 1777.

Your Letter to the President of the Congress with the Inclosures came to hand at a time when Congress was adjourn'd for two days, and the President being ill of the Gout, the Board of War have taken that part of the Letter into Consideration which relates to the removal of the Continental Stores from Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup> Such a Step the Board conceives wou'd be attended with consequences very injurious to the American Cause, as it wou'd probably throw the people into a panick, and if it shou'd afterwards appear to have been premature might render us contemptible in the Eyes of our Enemies. By your Letter it appears that you have been inform'd, General Putnam has with him at Princetown a Body of Men not less than 6000, and that there are in Philadelphia three thousand. Upon this Representation, it is the opinion of the Board that it will not be prudent for you to remove any of the Stores, at least, until you shall hear from Congress which will meet on Monday next.<sup>2</sup>

Congress have appointed Mr. Thomas Butler Armourer, and he is gone to settle his Family affairs & will be at Philadelphia in about ten days.<sup>3</sup> You will however get the Arms repair'd with all possible Dispatch & not detain the Men for want of them until his arrival with you.

Inclosed is a Resolve of Congress which the Board desire you to have printed & sent to all the Departments where Militia are employd. We are Gent. with the greatest respect, Yr. most obedient, humble Servants,

Roger Sherman

Francis Lightfoot Lee

Samuel Adams

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147). In the hand of Joseph Nourse and signed by Adams, Lee, and Sherman.

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 22, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> On January 28 Congress confirmed the Board of War's "opinion" on this subject. *JCC*, 7:66.



<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:55. This day Joseph Nourse, acting in behalf of the Board of War, wrote a letter of introduction for Butler to the Executive Committee. PCC, item 147, fol. 45.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 25th. 1777

This express returning from Boston we opened the enclosed letter directed to you as President of Congress, & are sorry to find such an Account of Capt Roach, but surely some Act or thing should be laid to his charge that will justify a dismissal altho' a Suspected Character shou'd not be trusted with a Ship.<sup>1</sup> We have no intelligence to Communicate at this time, a Gentleman just come from Camp says there is not a day passes without our taking more or less Prisoners in the Jerseys & that the Enemy's Army is mouldering fast by Captures, Desertions & Deaths. It is strongly rumoured & with Circumstances that give some Credit to the Report, That Fort Washington is taken by Genl Heaths Army, an officer just come out of New York says Colo Atlee told him he heard Genl. Robertson say it was in our possession, and this officer reports that the Inhabitants in New York were in the greatest Confusion getting their Goods packed up & putting them on board Vessells. The Troops constantly under Arms, not more than 900 to 1000 of them amongst these a good many Hessians who wish for a fair opportunity to Submit. We hope soon to give you good News & are respectfully sir Your obed Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

P.S. Mr Budden is come from Camp & says the Enemy have sent over 3000 of their Troops from Amboy to Staten Island & it is reported that Genl Sullivan was moving towards Amboy.

We have recd here fifteen hundred pounds Money of Wm Lux Esqr of Baltimore which is paid in to Mr Mease for the Public use & this day we remit Mr. Lux our draft on you for that Sum which be pleased to pay. We expect to negotiate another draft for 5000 Dollars in the same manner, Constant calling on us for money. We are &c, R M

Sir we have detained this express about two hours, & have advanced him three Dollars.

R. Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> It is not known to what letter Morris is referring here. In a subsequent letter to President Hancock, which is not in PCC, the Massachusetts Council charged that Capt. John Roche was "a person of doubtful character," which led Congress to suspend him as commander of the Continental sloop *Ranger* on June 14, 1777. This was a remarkable suspension, for although Roche had helped to design the *Ranger*, he had never been appointed to command it. *JCC*, 8:464-65; and

William M. Fowler, Jr., *Rebels under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), pp. 263–65. For further information about Roche, see Marine Committee to John Langdon, October 17, 1776, note.

## Thomas Nelson to Robert Morris

My Dear sir

Baltimore Jany 25th 1777

I thank you & the rest of my Jovial friends, for the notice that was taken of me at the Hills. Fifty pounds would I give, out of my own pocket, that we were now at Philadelphia, not only that I might partake of the Weekly enjoyment of my friends upon the Schullkill, but that I might get away from this place, where almost every man seems to think it his Duty to extort from a Member of Congress, as much as he possibly can, upon every occasion.

The great demand for Money from every quarter has kept our Treasury so low that I have not had it in my power to send you any; there will however be 200,000 dollars sent in two or three days at farthest, & Loan Office certificates to Mr Smith to the amount of 300,000 Dollars. Indeed my dear friend the state of our Treasury is such that I hate to think of it.<sup>1</sup> When I could give satisfactory answers to Congress upon a requisition being made for a Sum of Money I took the greatest pleasure in transacting the business of the Treasury Board, but of late we have been so circumstanced that I had almost as live go to a Jail as go near the Treasury. The Period is not far distant, when the last five millions of Dollars will be exhausted & by your accounts the Loan Office in your State, will not do much for us unless the Interest be raised, which I fear Congress will not do, and what is to be done then I know not to pay the innumerable claimants against the Continent. Some of our Members have great dependence upon the Lottery, at best it is but a game & when I consider that the Tickets are equal in number to any State Lottery in Great Britain & that they have all Europe to vend their Ticketts in & we are confined to America, where we are not much acquainted with these things, I confess I have no great expectation of it being drawn, perhaps an experiment of half the Ticketts might have succeeded.<sup>2</sup> We are greatly in want of able Financiers to supply our Treasury.

Harrison & Hooper have taken to their Horses. The former when mounted looks like a Commander in chief. The latter would make a good Aid de Camp to him; but he has Leave of absence on account of his health.<sup>3</sup> I am Dr sir, Yours sincerely,

Thos Nelson Jr.

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> See also Board of Treasury to the Executive Committee, January 28, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> For the troubled history of the United States lottery, which did not hold its first drawings until May 1778, see William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke, December 4, 1776, note 2.

<sup>a</sup> Nelson was also in a poor state of health and probably left Baltimore before William Hooper, for according to Hooper's February 1 letter to Robert Morris, "Nelson by advice of a Physician goes tomorrow." Hooper was relieved by Thomas Burke on February 4, but did not leave before the 5th, for he enclosed resolutions of that date in a letter written after his departure. See *JCC*, 7:85, 87; and William Hooper to Joseph Hewes, February 15, 1777.

## George Ross to the Executive Committee

Gent

Baltimore 25th Janry. 1777

I shall attend your Summons with pleasure for be assured nothing but my duty would induce me to stay in this vile place. In order to hasten the business of the Court I have directed Mr. Robinson<sup>1</sup> to issue the proper Writs and give Notice that a Court will be held on Monday the 11th of next Month. I am with real Esteem yr. very Hble Servt.

Geo. Ross

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78). Addressed: "Robt. Morris, Geo. Clymer, Geo. Walton, Esqrs."

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Robeson (d. 1781), Register of the Pennsylvania Admiralty Court. The Executive Committee's "Summons" has not been found, but they obviously had asked Ross, judge of the court, to return to Philadelphia to hear a case in which they may have had an interest. Robeson usually inserted public notices of forthcoming cases in Dunlap's *Pennsylvania Packet*, but no issue containing notice of a case to be heard on February 11 has been found. During this period of Philadelphia's vulnerability to attack, the city's newspapers were published irregularly, and Dunlap printed no issue of the *Packet* between January 22 and February 4. Robeson's notices appearing in the latter issue pertain to cases scheduled to be heard on February 19 and 20.

This letter is the sole piece of evidence found to indicate Ross' motive for leaving Baltimore and helps to approximate the date of his departure. According to the journals he was absent January 29. *JCC*, 7:68.

## Secret Committee to Robert Morris

Sir,

Baltimore January 25th 1777

We are duely favored with yours of the 14th instant with its inclosures, also with your last of the 21st by Mr. Fitzsimmons.<sup>1</sup> We have signed the order in favor of John Nixon & Co. for £6025.9.9 Pena. currency, and delivered it to Mr. Fitzsimmon.

You are perfectly right in your opinion of the propriety of dispatching accounts of the events of this Campaign, and the more so, as the Loan on which you rely for supporting our credit under the failure of remittances, will probably depend upon Mr. Deanes receiving Congressional answers to what you may remember he wrote upon this subject. We approve entirely of the several orders you have given as mentioned in your letter of

January the 14th. With respect to the West India Ship mentioned by Mr. Jarvis, we would refer you to what had been done on the subject of purchasing Vessels and Cargos to the eastward before we came from Philadelphia, but if you think that not sufficient, and the information you may receive of the enemy being retired, shall induce you to think the risk not too great, we willingly leave this matter to your discretion, and wish you to write Mr. Jarvis as you shall judge most conducive to the public good. With respect to the purchases you propose to make at Philadelphia, we are willing likewise to leave them to your judgement, as you are more in the way of being informed touching the station and movements of the enemy. The obligation that rests upon us to remit is certainly very strong but the danger of loss may be so great as to overcome it, since all that falls into the enemies hands will not only fail of remittance, but add strength to those we would wish to weaken as much as possible. As the rice from Georgia is otherwise to be disposed of, we give up the scheme of moving the Indigo here, and you may, if you please, ship it from Philadelphia. We must depend on memory, not having the books here, but we wish you to reflect, if the time is not near when a Frigate was by agreement to convoy goods here that were to be shipt by Mr. Merkle to the W. Indies! We have but faint recollection of this business, you undoubtedly remember the thing, and we only mean to turn your attention to that subject.<sup>2</sup>

We have not yet conversed with Mr. Fitzsimmon about the Friendship, but should it happen that we do not agree with him, we shall endeavor to get a Cargo here for Mr. Curson as you propose.

We are Sir, with much regard, Your most obedient humble servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Fran. Lewis

Wm. Whipple

RC (MA). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> Morris' letter of the 21st has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings, June 27, 1776, note 1.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen, Strawberry Mount, Sunday. January 26th. 1777.

Colo. Richardson is in want of 4000 Dollars to recruit his Battalion. Be pleased to advance him that Sum, and I will send the Money by Mr. J. Chase on Wednesday. Congress ordered 60,000 Dollars to be advanced to our State for the new Levies to be raised,<sup>1</sup> I have received 20,000 & paid about 22,000. If you please I will send down any Sum You please to order.



I shall return to Baltimore in the Morning. I have wrote to Colonel Rumsey to attend. I hope the Assembly will take immediate and effectual Measures to have a Representation in Congress, & that too as full as possible. You may be assured that it is of great Importance not only to this State but to all the United States to keep our State represented in Congress. Reasons will occur to you to use your Influence with the Members to appoint Delegates immediately on their Meeting. The raising of our Quota, in my opinion, is the only subject of greater Moment than being always represented in the Great Council of America.

I am, Gent. with Respect and Regard, Your obedt. Servt.

Saml Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> This advance had been authorized on January 10. *JCC*, 7:28.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 26th. 1777

The enclosed letter from the General<sup>1</sup> came in last Night by Mr. McClenaghan one of the Light Horse of this City, who says that the day after he recd it, he heard a heavy Canonade succeeded by a long & smart platoon firing; from the direction & distance of the Sound he judges that Genl Sullivan who had about 3000 Men with him, must have marched from Elizabeth to Bonum Town & there been met by the Enemy which brought on this engagement. He stopped at a place about Seven miles from Brunswick & saw there a Woman who said She had just come from thence & that the Enemy's light Horse had rode into Town in a good deal of Confusion for a reinforcement. This Circumstance & no bad account having yet come gives a favourable cast to this affair and We hope soon to transmit you an agreeable account of it. Mr Clenaghan says the Streets of Brunswick have above fifty Horses lying in them that have died for want of Forage, & those taken from them showed they have been Starved.

The Generals Question respecting Small arms, deserves much attention, all that have lately been imported have been put into the hands of Militia both here & in the Eastern States, and altho very considerable quantities may reasonably be expected this Winter, yet their arrival is very uncertain whilst the Enemies ships line the Coast, and as there now is undoubtedly more than sufficient of Good Arms in the Country some efficacious Method shou'd be adopted to draw them into Public arsenals from whence they may be taken as wanted either for the use of the army or Militia & at such arsenals Gunsmiths might be employed to repair & put them in good order. If one or two arsenals were established in each State & every Militia Man obliged to deposit his arms there when not in

service, it wou'd go great lengths towards curing the present evil, which is intollerable for as the practice now is, the Militia of America wou'd drain the Magazines of all Europe. Mr Walton sets off this morning for East Town to the Indian Treaty. Colo. Geo. Taylor was down here & we have prevailed on him to go with him, but we have not recd any instructions from Congress relative to this Treaty, if any do come they shall be sent after them by express. We observe in one of the Resolves of Congress Mr Lewis is directed to have the address of the Convention of New York translated & Published in the German Language & as we had wrote the Congress that we had undertaken that business here, we consider this Resolve as a reproof, therefore shall take care not to be so officious again, the Work of translating however is done & we believe either in, or ready for the Press.<sup>2</sup> The Delaware continues too full of Ice for Ships to Sail which is a pity as Capt. Biddle has now 200 Men onbd the Randolph & is ready to push out the first opening; our Tradesmen will now return and the other Ships shall be got ready fast as possible.

We are Sir, Your most Obedt hble servts.

For the Committee. Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written and signed by Robert Morris.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:68.

<sup>2</sup> See Executive Committee to Hancock, January 7, 1777, note 2.

## Board of Treasury to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen

Baltimore Jany 28, 1777

We are just inform'd that our Money press will stop in six days from this time, unless a supply of Paper be immediately sent us. Mr Gibson has been written to to push Messrs Hall & Sellers to expedite the furnishing us with this very necessary Article; and if a Waggon be not already set out with it, we must beg your assistance in forwarding it.

I am for the Board of Treasury Gentlemen, Your Obedt Servt,

Thos Nelson jr.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78).

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town January 28. 1777

Captain Yates will be ready to march his Company tomorrow.<sup>1</sup> His first Lieutenant is too ill to march. There is no second Lieutt. or Ensign



Conveyance. The Council of Safety & they provided presents for the Indians before they set out & the Acct. thereof may be settled on their return. We shall duely attend to Mr Butler when he comes & have already directed Mr Commissary Towers to give him every information & assistance the nature of his duty may require.

Genl. Mifflin informs us it is absolutely necessary that a Riding School be opened here immediately for the purpose of breaking the Horse &c. We believe he is right and Congress will please to signify their pleasures. He wishes us to buy a Dutch Church that is to be sold here, as he thinks it well Calculated for the purpose & when done with, will be worth the money it costs, whereas if one is to be built it will cause delay & Expence that may by this purchase be saved. We are ready to give any assistance in our power to this business. We are glad to find 200,000 Dollars is coming up, but as every department are applying to us for money this will not last long and unless you raise the Interest we fear the Loan Office will not bring it in fast as we cou'd wish & shall want. We have not recd any regular account of the affair at Bonum Town mentioned in our last, but flying report says our People proved the Weaker party & were obliged to retire after Killing & wounding a good many of the Enemy. They also took some Waggons & it is also reported that another Skirmish happened on Friday more favourable to us. The Militia that have already served Six Weeks are now coming in, and as Mr. Dallam paymaster to the flying Camp is still here we have desired him to settle & pay their accts, at least such as the Council of Safety do not settle with. We sent him the Copy of Resolve of Congress 14th Inst. & ordered that he shou'd know it to be strictly complied with before payment, that he shou'd be mindful to stop all advances & oblige the officers to swear to their Muster Rolls, so that we hope justice *only* will be done.

You will find herein a letter from Colo De Gainault who was taken with Genl. Lee. He complains of Ill usage & wants more money, hard money cannot be got here. We took infinite pains to Collect some for Genl Lee, appointed two Gentn to go round the City and declared the purpose it was intended for, but they cou'd not get sufficient to pay what Mr Morris borrowed to send Genl Washington. The answer generally given was that they had sent their money into the Country.<sup>1</sup>

We have the honor to remain, sir, your Obedt hble servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

P.S. We have procured the Steel & Rod Iron for Genl Schulyer & it will be sent immediately.<sup>2</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer. LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> In his capacity as a member of the Marine Committee, Morris wrote the following note this day on the verso of a January 22 petition to Congress from Gotlieb



Klose: "I am of opinion the within Cloaths & Tools being proved to be the property of the passenger as mentioned Shou'd be given up to him." PCC, item 41, 5:60. In that petition Klose, "a Native of Silesia and late Missionary from the United Brethren to the Negroes in the Island of Jamaica," requested the return of the effects which had been taken from him when the ship on which he was returning to England in December 1776 was captured by the Continental brig *Andrew Doria*. Congress granted this request on February 5, but unfortunately for Klose, the *Andrew Doria's* prize had already been retaken by the British. Ibid., fol. 59; Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1017; and *JCC*, 7:89.

<sup>2</sup> The postscript to the LB contains this additional sentence: "You have herewith a Specimen of the translation of the address of the Convention of New York to their constituents and we will send 300 Copies by the first good conveyance to the Convention and 300 to Congress, the remaining 400 we will deliver to the Council of Safety here to be distributed."

## Executive Committee to George Walton and George Taylor

Gentlemen,

January 28th 1777

The annexed writing is a Copy of a Resolve of Congress respecting your treaty with the Indians at Easton.<sup>1</sup> It came to hand this Morning & we Send it forward that you may act agreeable thereto as the presents are already provided. It is not necessary for us to send you the Thousand Dollars, but if you want any part of them, you can take up so much money from some person or other that may want to make payments and we will pay your drafts for that amount. We have not one word of news Since you left us, except bare report of a Skirmish or two in the Jersies with Forageing Parties. We are sir, Your hble Servts

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Addressed: "To Geo. Walton & Geo. Taylor Esquires, com. of Congress at Easton."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:62-63.

## Elbridge Gerry to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen

Baltimore Jany 28th 1777

The Commissioners of the Treasury have directed Mr Starret, who has the Care of superintending the Manufacturer of the Loan Office paper in Chester County, to deliver three thousand Sheets into your Hands at Philadelphia & request You to order it to be packed inclosed in a Case & sent by a safe Conveyance to them in this place, as soon as may be after your receiving it. The Necessity of giving Dispatch to the

affairs of the Treasury, & of conducting this Matter with Security obliges the Committee to give You this Trouble, wch they would otherwise have gladly avoided.

I am Gentlem with respect your very hum Serv, Elb Gerry

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78).

## John Hancock to the Delaware Assembly and the New York Convention

Gentlemen,

Balto. Jany. 28th. 1777

The Necessity of every State being properly represented in Congress to add Weight & Reputation to the Counsels of America, as well as to keep up that Union & good Correspondence so essential to our Country, will naturally suggest the Motives that induced the Congress to pass the above Resolve, which I have no Doubt you will immediately comply with.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed & very hble Ser.

J H Presidt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> The enclosed resolve of January 24 urged both states to send full delegations to Congress, "there being no delegates attending from . . . Delaware, and but one from . . . New York, who . . . is not empowered to give the vote of that State." *JCC*, 7:61.

## Marine Committee Order

Ordered,

Baltimore In Marine Commee. Jany. 28th. 1777.

That Colo. Wolcot transmit to governor Trumbull the resolve of Congress of Jany. 23d. for building two frigates in Connecticut & that he impower governor Trumbull & his Council to determine upon the places where they shall be built, & to appoint proper persons to execute & superintend the business, provided the season will admit of the timber being properly cut so as to effect the building of the frigates next summer.<sup>1</sup>

By order of Marine Committee, John Hancock Chairman

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wolcott transmitted Congress' January 23 resolve and the Marine Committee's January 28 order in a letter of January 29 to Governor Trumbull that has not been found. The Connecticut Council of Safety took steps to begin construction of the two frigates on February 17 and 18. *JCC*, 7:58; and Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1221-22.

## Arthur Middleton to Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Tuesday Evening, January 28, 1777

Mr. Middleton presents his Compliments to Mr. Purveyance, & requests the favour of him, if convenient, to order the Blankets to be delivered this Evening to the Bearer. If it is not convenient, A. M. will send for them Tomorrow morning. A Note of the Cost will oblige A. M. who will send the money Tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>

MS not found; reprinted from *C.F. Libbie & Co. Catalog*, November 15–16, 1889, item 872.

<sup>1</sup>On the verso of Middleton's letter is the following note, written in Baltimore on January 27 and addressed to Robert and Samuel Purviance: "Gentlemen, Deliver to Arthur Middleton esquire on order, eight blankets from the Continental Store and charge them to Mr. Middleton. We are Gentlemen your humble Servants, Richard Henry Lee, Fra. Lewis, Wm. Whipple." Ibid. The signers of this note were members of the Secret Committee.

Robert Morris to the Committee of  
Secret Correspondence

Gentn.

Philada Jany 28th. 1777

I have this day rec'd the enclosed letter from Mr. Bingham, & as our River now promises a speedy opening I shall send him a supply of News papers & intelligence.<sup>1</sup> It may also be proper that you do it from Baltimore and if you approve taking a person into pay for the purpose of Collecting News, News papers, Political Publications & writing a Diary of Public transactions I will try to find a fit person & engage him in this Work, so very necessary; for we find by experience it is impossible for Members of Congress to do these things regularly & constantly whilst they have so many other dutys to mind. I have recd the Copy of a letter from Mr. Deane that was taken but was preserved without the Captors ever coming at the Contents, it is as follows<sup>2</sup>—

"Dr Sir

Bordeaux Sept. 17. 1776

"I shall send you in October Cloathing for Twenty thousand Men, thirty thousand Fusils, one hundred Tons of Powder, Two hundred Brass Canon, Twenty four Brass mortars with shell, shot, Lead &c in proportion. I am to advise you that if in Future you will give Commissions to Seize Portugueze Ships you may depend on the Friendship & alliance of Spain, let me urge this measure, much may be got, nothing can be lost by it.<sup>3</sup> Exercise at all events your Navy, I will procure if Commissioned any quantity of Sail Cloth & Cordage. A General War is undoubtedly at hand in Europe & consequently America will be Safe, if you baffle the Arts &

Arms of the two Howe's through the Summer, everyone here is in your favour. Adieu. I will write again next week."

I beleive this was wrote at Paris altho dated Bourdeaux for a blind, but am not sure. I am a good deal of his opinion respecting the Portugeuze. The only doubt is whether, that Kings declaration & shutting up his Ports against us, will justify us in the Eyes of the World or in other Words, whether he has given us sufficient cause to declare War on him & his Subjects. If he has we shou'd not hesitate, the bait is tempting & that insignificant Nation can do us no harm. Our River is now nearly clear of Ice and I propose pushing out Captn. Biddle.<sup>4</sup> I do think we cannot employ him & the small Vessells better than to send them to Martinico for the Stores mentioned in Mr Ds letter, and I will send out the Indico now here as a remittance towards paying our Debts in that Island.

I have engaged a proper person to carry your dispatches to France & send him out in a French Ship that if she once gets out to Sea will appear as if She had loaded in Martinico & she is actually French property, which gives a fine chance of going safe. I have wrote a full Account to Mr Deane of all that has happened to our Armies since the taking of Fort Washington to this day, but think you had best do the same, that is Continue from the date of your last letter to the present time. I am very respectfully,  
Gentn, Your obed Servant, Robt Morris

P.S. Here will be several opportunities both to Europe & the West Indies soon.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Addressed: "To The Honble Benjn. Harrison Esqr. Member of Congress Baltimore. For Committee of Correspondance Rob Morris."

<sup>1</sup> The date of Bingham's letter has not been determined.

<sup>2</sup> This is Silas Deane's September 17, 1776, letter to Morris. For the response of Congress, see Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris, February 2, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Congress had cautiously adopted a resolution on December 23, 1776, calling for explicit information on the actions of Portugal. Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris, December 21, 1776, note 7. On May 1, 1777, Congress appointed a committee "to inquire into the laws and customs of Nations respecting neutrality, and to report their opinion whether the conduct of the King of Portugal, in forbidding the vessels of the United States to enter his ports and ordering those already there to depart at a short day, is not a breach of the laws of neutrality, and will justify acts of hostility against the subjects of the said King." But no further action of Congress appears in the journals. *JCC*, 7:318.

<sup>4</sup> Capt. Nicholas Biddle, commander of the frigate *Randolph*, was ordered to convoy several merchantmen out to sea. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1064-65.

## Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams

My dear Betsy

Baltimore Jany 29th. 1777

Yesterday I had the Pleasure of receiving two Letters from you by the same hand, dated the 9th and 22d of December. And just now a Letter



is deliverd to me from my Friend Mr Bradford, dated the 13th of this Month, wherein I am informd that you was then in good Health and Spirits. If you had not told me that you had written to me Six Letters since I left Boston, I should have suspected that you did not keep a good Look out for Expresses which come this Way. I have now receivd only four of them. The others may possibly have fallen into the Hands of the Lords *Protectors* of America. There is one Way in which you may probably make up the Loss to me, and that is by writing oftener. I assure you, it would not be troublesome to me to receive half a Dozen Letters from you at one Time.

You tell me you was greatly alarmd to hear that General Howe's Army was on the March to Philadelphia. I have long known you to be possessd of much Fortitude of Mind. But you are a Woman, and one must expect you will now and then discover Timidity so natural to your Sex. I thank you, my dear, most cordially for the Warmth of Affection which you express on this Occasion, for your Anxiety for my Safety and your Prayers to God for my Protection. The Man who is conscientiously doing his Duty will ever be protected by that Righteous and all powerful Being, and when he has finishd his Work he will receive an ample Reward. I am not more convinced of any thing than that it is my Duty to oppose to the utmost of my Ability the Designs of those who would enslave my Country; and with Gods Assistance I am resolvd to oppose them till their Designs are defeated or I am called to quit the Stage of Life.

I am glad to hear that the Winter has been in a remarkable Degree so favorable in New England, because it must have lessend the [. . .]<sup>1</sup> been increasd [. . .]<sup>2</sup> the Poor, is in holy Writ coupled with him who *oppresses* them. Be you warm and be you cloathd, without administering the necessary Means, is but cold Consolation to the miserable. I am glad you have given Shelter to Mrs A. who had not where to lay her Head. She deservd your Notice, and she has more than rewarded you for it in being, as you say she is, *grateful*. Whenever you see a poor Person grateful, you may depend upon it, if he were rich he would be charitable. We are not however, to seek Rewards in this Life, for Deeds of Charity, but rather imitate the all merciful Being, of whom, if I mistake not, it is said in Scripture, that he doth Good to the Evil and *unthankful*. There is indeed no such Thing as disinterested Benevolence among Men. Self Love and social, as Pope tells us, is the same. The truly charitable Man partakes of the Feelings of the wretched wherever he sees the Object, and he relieves himself from Misery by relieving others.

I am greatly grievd for the Loss we have met with in the Death of Mr Checkley. From the Account you give me of the Nature & Extent of his Disorder, I conclude he must have died before this Time. He was indeed a valuable Relation and Friend. Have you lately heard from your Brother at St Eustatia?

We have no News here. The Events which take place in the Jerseys must be known in Boston before you can be informd of them from this Place. There is a Report that a Party of the Jersey Militia fell in with a larger Party of the Enemy, killed about twenty and took a greater Number Prisoners besides fifty three Waggons and Provisions. This is believd. It is also said that General Heath has taken Fort Washington. If it be so, we shall soon have the News confirmd.<sup>3</sup>

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> MS damaged, approximately ten words missing.

<sup>2</sup> MS damaged, at least one line missing.

<sup>3</sup> Remainder of MS missing.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Balt. Town Jany. 29. 1777

I am directed by Congress to lay the enclosed Copy of a Letter from Mr. Bingham before our General Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

The privates of Captain Smiths Company petitioned the Congress & I am ordered to enclose the papers to your Board.<sup>2</sup>

I am, respectfully, yr. obedt. Servt,

S Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> Enclosure not found. See Committee of Secret Correspondence to William Bingham, February 1, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> For the January 24 remonstrance of the men of Capt. Nathaniel Smith's company, threatening "to make our humble address to the Honorable Continental Congress," see *Md. Archives*, 16:73-74.

## John Hancock to the Executive Committee

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 29th 1777.

You will perceive from the Resolves herewith transmitted, that Congress do not at present see the Necessity of moving the public Stores from Philada., and that if any Circumstances should render such a Measure proper, you are to take such Steps therein as you think will contribute most to the public Good.<sup>1</sup> I beg Leave to request your Attention to the other Resolves, and have the Honour to be, Sir, Your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] Pray did you Send an Express to Boston with the Letters Inclos'd you in mine of Jany. 10th?

You will please to proceed to Erect the Magazine &c at Carlile, Congress not judging it proper to fix on any other place in preference.<sup>2</sup>

The Inclos'd to the General please to forwd by a good oppory.

Your Letters to 30th Jany have been duly Rec'd, a particular reply shall be made this Eveng by Express.<sup>3</sup>

The Inclos'd Letters from Mr Hewes & Hooper<sup>4</sup> I am Desir'd to Transmit you, & Mr Hooper Requests that as he is going home, you would forward the Answers to me, as the Express from North Carola. is waiting here, & he dare not proceed to Philada. by reason that he has not had the Small Pox.

How could you think that the order to Mr Lewis respectg the Printing the Address of New York Convenn. was design'd as a Reproof, very far from it, in a hurry I forgot the Paragraphs in yr Letter about your effecting that Business.<sup>5</sup> I have not yet seen that Conduct of yours that merits Reproof, you will have it fast enough when it occurs.

Adieu,

J H

RC (DNA: PCC, item 58). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock. The last three paragraphs of the postscript were evidently written on February 4. See below, note 3. The LB of this letter contains the first three paragraphs of the postscript, PCC, item 12A.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:66.

<sup>2</sup> See the resolution of December 27, 1776, on this issue in *JCC*, 6:1044.

<sup>3</sup> Congress received the Executive Committee's January 30 letter on February 4. *JCC*, 7:86.

<sup>4</sup> See William Hooper to Robert Morris, February 1, 1777. Hewes' letter has not been found.

<sup>5</sup> See Executive Committee to Hancock, January 26, 1777.

## John Hancock to Patrick Henry

Sir,

Baltimore Jany 29th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress relative to the Troops in your State, I have it in Charge to forward to you, and to request your immediate Attention to the same.<sup>1</sup> Altho the Congress formerly ordered the 2d & 7th Regiments from Virginia to join Genl. Washington, yet as they are not entirely satisfied that it will be in their Power to furnish them with Arms they have directed me to request, that you will send forward with the utmost Dispatch the Arms belonging to the said Battalions if it can be done consistent with the Safety of your State. I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Serv.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "His Excellency Patrick Henry Esqr., Govr. of Virginia."

<sup>1</sup> Congress had passed resolves about troops in Virginia on January 8, 14, 21, and 29. *JCC*, 7:21, 34, 51-52, 68-69.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 29th. 1777.

You will perceive from the Resolves herewith transmitted, that the Letters which Congress have Received from Genl. Fermoy & several other French Officers, are referred to your Consideration, without a particular Recommendation in Favour of either of those Gentlemen.<sup>1</sup> I do myself the Honour to enclose their Letters. A Representation to Congress from Colo. Kermovan, I transmitted this Morning by the Colonel.

I have wrote to the Govr. of Virginia on the Subject of the enclosed Resolve.

Your Favour of 22d inst. I had the Pleasure of receiving, and this Day laid the same before Congress.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, with perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. Serv,

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] As some Steps have been Taken with Respect to the Magazines at Brookfield & Carlile, the Congress judge it best they should be Erected there in preference to the other places mention'd by Genl Knox.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolve about the French officers referred to here, Hancock also sent Washington resolves of January 28 and 29 about stores in Philadelphia, two Virginia battalions, and money for Gen. Thomas Mifflin and the state of Connecticut. *JCC*, 7:65–66, 68–70. Hancock must not have dispatched this letter until February 1 because he also enclosed a resolve of that date about Capt. James Scott of Virginia. *JCC*, 7:82.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 152, 3:489–94, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:48–52.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 6:1044. Knox had recommended the establishment of magazines at Hartford, Conn., and York, Pa. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:23.

## Robert Morris to Silas Deane

[January 29, 1777]

I am now at the 29th Jany. without [having] had an oportunity to send away this very long Letter, our River having been full of Ice since the 9 or 10th Instt, however there is now an appearance of its becoming free again & several vessells will be pushing out altho the Men of war still Keep hovered above the Capes & I fear will do us much mischief [by] taking inward bound vessells—but this we cannot [help] unless France will send us a fleet of Line Battle ships & then we will teach him better manners. Genl. Washington still remains at Morris Town with his Troops cantoned or rather posted round Brunswick in such a manner as to teaze and [har-rass] the Enemy extremely. They possess no other [parts] of New Jersey at this time, then Brunswick, Amboy & the Comunications between



them. When they want forage they are obliged to send out very large parties and always meet some Loss, in short never a Day passes but we take some prisoners, kill & wound some of their Men and our people have taken from them a Number of Wagons, horses, Cattle, sheep, Bagage &c. It is a sad thing to depend on [Militia] for the defence of a Country as we find by ex[perience] our people go out but for a short time & [by this means] Genl. Washington's army is eternally shifting some Joining and some Leaving him so that it is [hard for] him to know his own Strength and he must remain in this disagreeable Situation until the new enlistments are Completed. Thank God they are going on very [fast] now, as our late Successes have given [new] springs to the Service. Genl. Howe has about [7000] Men at Brunswick & he has ordered a Reinforcement from Rhode Island where the New England Militia are collected ready to attack the Guards he shall leave there. Genl. Heath has marched down towards New York with this body of Militia & some few Regulars & taken Fort Independence with 400 Prisoners. We have reason to fear more he has retaken fort Washington and that we probably may expell the Enemy from New York. In short the face of things is totally changed, the spirit of the Whigs is up, the tories hide their heads, the money is regaining its Credit but not so essentially as it ought. This can only be effected by your procuring us the assistance of a fleet to protect our trade, and when we get plenty of goods the money will rise in volume as the prices decline. I have determined to send Capt. Thomas Bell to France for the purpose of delivering you a Letter from the Committee of Correspondence & this Letter also, the Newspapers for a Considerable time back. By him I write a Letter to my brother respecting the mode of employing Capt Bell after he has delivered his dispatches in which I hope for your Concurrence & that you will become a party concerned. I have [. . .] recd. a Copy of your Letter of 17 Sepr. to J. J. and shall be very anxious for the safe arrival of the Stores. Adieu Dr. Sir &c,

Robt Morris

Tr (MH-H). A continuation of Morris to Deane, January 8, 1777.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 30th 1777.

The Time of Congress, since my last, hath been principally taken up in devising Ways to prevent the Depretiation of the Continental Money, and to provide for the future Army. The Resolves ordered to be transmitted to the several States must have reached you before this, which renders it unnecessary to give the Substance or transmit Copies of them.<sup>1</sup>

Govr. Trumbull hath transmitted the Doings of the Committee of the New-England States to Congress. They will be taken up to Morrow, and I don't doubt approved.<sup>2</sup>

A Letter sent by Mr. Jarvis to the Secret Committee respecting his furnishing our State and the Massachusetts with Arms taken out of the Hancock and Adams, and desiring to know whether they approved his Conduct or not, and how in the future he was to act in similar Instances, was by them laid before Congress a few Days ago. This brought on a severe Inquiry into the Propriety of Rhode-Island's asking for those Arms, a Review of her former Conduct respecting the Cannon &c &c as well as into the Propriety of the Conduct of Agent Jarvis. After a smart Storm, the Conduct of the Agent was approbated. I hope our State will take special Care that the Arms be returned as soon as the Necessity for taking them shall cease.<sup>3</sup>

Before this reaches you, you will have heard of the Success of our Arms at Princetown as well as Trenton. Our scouting Parties have since been successful in many Instances; the principal you will have in the inclosed Hand-Bill, which at the same Time gives an Account of the taking of Fort Independance &c, on which I heartily congratulate you. A Cannon-ading and Platoon firing was heard a few Days ago near Elisabeth Town, where a Detachment under Genl. Sullivan was posted. From some Circumstances I am induced to believe that our Detachment hath come off victorious. I hope to hear of something clever from our State soon. *Now* is the Time to strike decisive Blows. The British Army are divided, and their Ardour is damped, and ours enhanced by our late Successes. It is a good old Proverb to strike while the Iron's hot, when it will yield to the Stroke. Our Affairs are in a fine Way at present, and if We do but push our Success the Contest will be decided this Winter; but if we should not embrace this golden Opportunity, Reinforcements will be sent over in the Spring, the War be protracted to the great Loss of the Lives and Properties of the Inhabitants of the United States. Therefore I will hope that the Troops collected in our State will not remain inactive this Winter, but exert themselves and make some capital Stroke on the Enemy.

I should be extremely glad to have an Assistant. I am afraid I shall be worn out by such a long continued attention. The Assembly I hope have chosen another Delegate. If they have I intreat that he may come on immediately; and I could wish for an Augmentation of Salary for Reasons I have already mentioned. Heartily wishing for a speedy Expulsion of the Enemy from our State, and for your Honor's Health and Prosperity I continue to be with great Esteem, your Honor's most obedient humble Servant.

William Ellery

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See the January 14 resolves on this issue in *JCC*, 7:35-37.

<sup>2</sup> See John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., this date.

<sup>3</sup> For further information about this matter, see *JCC*, 7:59-60; and Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:481. The "former conduct" Ellery refers to is discussed in John Hancock to Esek Hopkins, May 7, 1776, note 2.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Jany 30th. 1777

You will find herein a letter from the General<sup>1</sup> & sorry we are to find the report of the Capture of Fort Independance contradicted. It is surprising that we shou'd be so much in the dark respecting what passes on the other side the North River. Flying reports of successes there, have come to Town this very day but seeing so many falsities are Circulated we shall not trouble you with them. We are amazed at what the General says respecting his Army. Militia are constantly fitting out & going from hence, what becomes of them afterwards we dont know as the complaints for want of men Continue and we urge their being dispatched from hence all in our power. Colo Humpton is just come in from the Jersies & informs us that 3 to 400 Prisoners lately landed from New York at South Amboy are so weak & sickly that they cannot get along and the People on the Road are carting them to each others Houses to get the burthen of them from one to another. He adds that they perish for want of Physick & food having no officer to take the least care of them nor any money to purchase with. We sent for Doctr Shippen & have desired him to employ a proper person to go over & look after these poor Creatures and procure them such nourishment & succour as they may stand in need of, which we think Congress will approve of, as they wou'd not suffer those who have been fighting their battles to perish for want.

We shall send the General Copies of the Commissarys returns of military stores in this department agreeable to the desire of the Board of War and give him such other information respecting Powder as we can.

A ship is arrived in this River with 8 to 9000 barrels of Salt from Cadiz. A letter of the 7th Novr. to Mr Morris says there is an appearance of a general Rupture in Europe, a fleet had sailed from Cadiz just before this ship and when the Captain comes up we shall probably get some further acct of it. The letter writer says he thinks it was destined for South America. The Sachem Sloop of War has at last got up to Wilmington and if the Ice will permit we expect her up tomorrow.

We have the honor to remain, sir, Your Obedt hble servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

P.S. You have herein a letter from Cap Danl Joy who has been employed in attending the Casting & proving of Cannons.<sup>2</sup> He is an ingenious honest man & it deserves attention.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's January 26 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:497-503, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:63-68.

<sup>2</sup> Joy's December 21 letter to the Executive Committee is in PCC, item 78, 13:35.

## Executive Committee to Thomas Hartley

Sir,

January 30. 1777

The Committee of Congress have your letter respecting the Great Advance on the Price of Muskets at Lancaster and the difficulty this laid you under in Arming your Regiment, but as they can give you no certain assurance of your being Supplied from the expected Importations they are of opinion you ought as soon as possible to furnish the Regiment by purchase or Contract. They are aware of the impositions you will be liable to in this respect but trust to your care and circumspection in the Matter, and are, Sir, Your hble Servt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

## John Hancock to Andrew Lewis

Sir,

Baltimore, Jany. 30th. 1777.

The foregoing Resolve of Congress, I have it in Charge to transmit to you, and to direct, that you immediately issue such Orders as are necessary for carrying the same into Execution.

I am, Sir, your most obed. &amp; very hble Servt.

J H Presidt

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Brigadr. Genl. Lewis, Virginia." Endorsed by Jacob Rush: "N.B. The Resolve was to order the Part of the 8th Virginia Regiment back from South Carolina & to recruit those Companies & the others in Virginia & to march them to Genl. Washington." For this January 21 resolve, see *JCC*, 7:52.

## John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir,

Baltimore, Jany. 30th. 1777

I was duely honoured with your Favour of the 12th inst, and in Consequence of the same being laid before Congress, am now to inform you, that the Transactions of the Committee therein referred to will be taken up and considered by Congress tomorrow. The Result of this important Business, as well as every other Determination of Congress, in which the State of Connecticut is either partially or wholly interested, you may depend on my transmitting with the utmost Dispatch.<sup>1</sup> Wishing you very sincerely the Compliments of the Season, and every other Happiness, I am, with great Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Serv.

J H Presidt.



LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> Trumbull's January 12 letter to Hancock and the enclosed proceedings of the New England Convention are in PCC, item 66, 1:249-84. The records of the convention, which met in Providence between December 25, 1776, and January 2, 1777, are also accessible in *Collections of the New Hampshire Historical Society* 9 (1889): 245-71. The proceedings of the convention, which took steps to defend Rhode Island, stop the emission of paper money, regulate prices, and recruit Continental soldiers, were debated in Congress several times during the first half of February. At length on February 15 Congress approved the convention's measures for defending Rhode Island and halting the depreciation of paper money but referred to the other states for further consideration the steps taken to regulate prices. See *JCC*, 7:80-81, 87-88, 93-94, 97, 111-12, 118, 121, 124-25; Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debate, February 4 and 14; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debate, February 12 and 15, 1777.

## John Hancock to Joseph Trumbull

Sir,

Baltimore, Jany. 30th. 1777.

Some Complaints against your Deputy Mr. Carpenter Wharton having reached Congress, I am directed to give you this Information of it, with a View that you may make Enquiry into the Matter, and take proper Measures, in due Time, to prevent any Inconvenience or Loss, either to yourself, or the Public.<sup>1</sup> Your Prudence and discretion in the Conduct of this Affair, I can rely upon with the utmost Confidence. Wishing you the Compliments of the Season, and every Prosperity, I am, with Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. John Hancock Presidt.

RC (Ct). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock. Addressed: "Jos. Trumbull Esqr, Commissy General."

<sup>1</sup> Wharton was accused both of inadequately supplying the army and of paying extravagant prices for many of the supplies he procured for it, thereby increasing commissions and profits for himself and friends. Evidently there was much truth to these charges as Wharton failed to respond to them when later given the chance to do so by Congress, and he was dismissed from office by Trumbull. See *JCC*, 7:70, 177, 266-67, 280, 8:499-501; and Roger Sherman to Joseph Trumbull, April 2, and to Oliver Wolcott May 13, 1777.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

Dear Sir,

Baltimore January 30th 1777

It is with much pleasure I inform you that our affairs in the Jerseys wear as favorable an aspect as we could possibly [hope fo]r. And if the militia remain with the General un[til the othe]r recruits get up, I verily believe the business of [the campaign] will be nearly finlshed for the] winter. Wonder[ful as it m]ay seem, yet it is fact that our great successes in Jersey since the 24th of Decr. have been obtained by an army chiefly irregular, and much inferior in number to the regular force of the enemy.

And the Army that now so greatly and so ignominiously distress the British force at Brunswick is inferior in number to the one it now confines to the Brunswick hills. The Committee of Congress at Philadelphia tell us a report has come there of an engagement between Gen. Sullivans detachment of the army near Brunswick and a strong detachment of the enemy. The issue not certainly known but they say a person immediately from Brunswick relates that the British light horse came in much confusion from the field of battle to that Town calling for a reenforcement. We therefore hope hourly for good news from that quarter, nor are we without hopes of good accounts from N. York. We know they were in a very defenceless situation lately, and if the motions of Gen. Heath are not too slow, so that reenforcement may come from Rhode Island or be sent from Jersey for the defence of N. York, he will go near to free that City from the Tyrants Troops. We have no late news from Europe except by the way of Hallifax, where the report is, that a War between France & G. Britain is inevitable, and the B. Officers there say "the damnd Rebels would keep America yet." I hope the rightful Owners will keep America, and in despite of all the efforts of Tyranny & its Tools. Farewell dear Sir, affectionately yours,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC photostat). Richard Henry Lee, *The Letters of Richard Henry Lee*, ed. James C. Ballagh, 2 vols. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1911-14), 1:251-52. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

## Richard Henry Lee to John Page

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 30, 1777

Altho our Army in the Jersies, since the 24th of December has consisted chiefly of Militia and tho their numbers have not been and are not equal to that of the enemy, yet we have been in a continual series of success. Their forage and Foragers have been every where destroyed and beaten, and they are actually confined at present to the hills of Brunswick, and extremely distressed there. The inclosed papers will shew you how active, brave, and successful our people have lately been, and I have the best groundred hope, that if the Militia do not leave the General before the regular recruits get up, we shall be able to give a very good account of the enemy before this winter Campaign is over. We have an account from our Committee at Phila. of an engagement between Gen. Sullivans detachment of the Army near Brunswick, and a strong party of the enemy. The issue not certain, but they say, a person from Brunswick relates that the enemies light horse come from the Field of Battle in great confusion calling for a reenforcement. We are in constant expectation of good news both from Brunswick and N. York.

I am your affectionate & obedient,

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. It is reported here that 2 Ships of War are within our Capes, is it so.<sup>1</sup>  
Please let me know how many Gallies are in our Commonwealth now fit  
for action, and their force.

R.H. Lee

RC (MWA).

<sup>1</sup> A British squadron under the direction of Commodore William Hotham captured several American vessels in Chesapeake Bay during the last ten days of January. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:964, 1004, 1019, 1033-34, 1047, 1054.

## Marine Committee to Captain Nicholas Biddle

Sir

January 30th 1777

I have undoubted intelligence that there are not any men of war at the Capes indeed as an evidence of it a large Ship is come up the Bay, I therefore think it highly proper that you proceed to Sea immediately, and as you have now more men considerably than you had when I gave your last orders, I think proper to recall those and instead thereof you must observe the following Instructions.

You are first to make returns to the Board of Assistants of all the Stores in each department, that your Boatswain, Gunner and other officers may account for what is under their respective care and the same with provisions. Return also a compleat List of your officers and men on board, but as I would wish you not to loose one Moments time in getting out to Sea these returns can be made out as you go down and may be sent up from the Capes therefore you are to make the best of your way down the moment the Ice will permit, and I expect the Hornet and Fly will be in readiness to go down with you. If so you had best keep them ahead to look out. (Several Merchantmen will also go down with you, and you are to convoy them fairly off to Sea and keep with them for a few days if possible, soon as you find yourself fairly out at Sea, you will no doubt try the Ships Sailing and I expect she will perform wonderfully in that way, you will of course exercise your Men at the great guns, and prepare them for Action soon as possible.

The Marine Committee now at Baltimore have instructed Commodore Hopkins "to fit out the two Continental Frigates Warren and Providence with all possible expedition, and to order them forthwith to proceed on a Cruize upon the enemies ships of war that are interrupting the commerce of the United States from the Harbour of Newport to the Capes of Virginia and they are to take, burn, sink, and destroy all such of the enemies Vessels as they shall fall in with."<sup>1</sup> These are the Instructions for those Ships and therefore I think they must be proper for you and for your encouragement in this service I must observe that there are no Cruizing Ships an over match for you except the two Deckers, for altho you think

you have not seamen enough yet that is just their case, except the Roebuck there is none of them halfmanned, therefore you have only to avoid two Deckers or engaging when there is more than one in sight. Any of their other single Ships you need not fear, especially if you can persuade your men to board, remember what a glorious exploit it will be, to add one of their frigates or 20 Gun Ships to our Navy, in a few days after you get out and if the Randolph has but Heels I think you can and will do it, you will then get seamen plenty. If your ships sails remarkably fast you may take libertys with them, If she does not be more cautious and try to find out her trim. I shall send a Copy of these Instructions to Congress and it is possible they may send fresh orders to you, which shall be lodged with Henry Fisher at Lewis Town, and the light House will be Ordered to shew a large white sheet when they have any orders for you and find a frigate in sight.<sup>2</sup>

Should any unfortunate accident befall you destroy these orders rather than let the enemy get them, and you will as opportunitys occur transmit us Accounts of your proceedings. You'll observe that many merchant Vessels are expected in with valuable Stores to this port, therefore you'll afford them all possible protection and had best keep in their tract as long as you can.

I wish you would send me signals by which you may be known, in case we should send out any of our small Cruizers to look for you, also to deliver to the other frigates that may go from hence Rhode Island &c. You will be careful of the Randolph, her Stores and Materials, kind to your officers and men, but observing Strict discipline, humane to your Prisoners, and send your prizes into safe ports.

With the best wishes for your Success I am Sir, Your obedt. sert,  
Robt Morris V. P.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "Captain Nicholas Biddle of the frigate Randolph."

<sup>1</sup> See Marine Committee to Esek Hopkins, January 21, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Biddle's sailing instructions were drastically altered in the middle of February. See Marine Committee to Nicholas Biddle, February 15, 1777.

## Benjamin Rush to Henry Knox

Sir,

Baltimore Jany. 30. 1777.

If the tender Acquaintance I have with you will not justify the freedom I am about to take in recommending a young gentleman of distinguished merit to your patronage, I am sure a regard for the credit of your corps will excuse me. The young gentleman is a graduate of the New Jersey College, and is intimately acquainted with those branches of knowledge with *[which]* are connected with the Science of War. He possesses moreover



military talents, has great industry & ingenuity, *draws well*, and has given proofs of real courage. He is now a third lieutenant in a company of Artillery, but has the Offer of a company of infantry from the State of Maryland. As his genius & inclination both mark him for the Artillery, he is willing to give up his offer of a company of infantry for a company of Artillery in your brigade. You will I am sure esteem him a great acquisition. I should have informed you before that his military talents receive great lustre from the purity of his morals, and from the agreeableness of his manners. He is a perfect little Gentleman. His name is Ebenr. Finley.<sup>1</sup> He is the third Son of the late Dr. Finley the president of the College of New Jersey.

Please to communicate the event of this application to me as soon as possible, and it shall immediately be communicated to Mr. Finley.

I am Sir with great esteem, your most Obedient, Hble Servt,

B. Rush

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Ebenezer Finley (ca. 1754–90) was a 1772 graduate of the College of New Jersey.

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr.

Sir

Baltimore Jany 30th. 1777

I Enclose you copies of two resolutions of Congress.<sup>1</sup> 300,000 dollars are ordered by Congress to be Sent to you which will be immediately forwarded. The Enclosed paper contains our latest accounts from the army in New Jersy. This week we received by express a Copy of the resolutions of a Convention of Committees of the four New England States lately held at Providence. They have recommended Measures for Supporting the Credit of the Paper currency and for raising an army for defence of the State of Rhode Island. They have also recommended to the Assemblies to fix the prices of a number of Necessary Articles & have agreed on a farther bounty to encourage the Soldiers to inlist in the new army. The measures have been adopted by the Assembly of Connecticut. Congress has assigned to Morrow to consider them. A resolution passed to Day allowing Mr. Kirtland 444  $\frac{2}{5}$  dollars for his Salary as missionary to the Indians and a further Sum of 300 dollars for his extra Services and expences as Chaplain, and Indian Interpreter. We have no foreign News here. I am with due regards, Your humble Servant,

Roger Sherman

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Probably the resolves of this day for increasing Trumbull's salary and sending him funds. See JCC, 7:73, 75.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town Jany. 31st. 1777

I sent you yesterday by Mr. John Gassaway Nineteen thousand Dollars.<sup>1</sup>

I must again press you to solicit a Representation for our State. The Order of this Day is to appoint a Number of General Officers. Are We uninterested in the Choice of Generals? I shall endeavor to put off this Business for a few Days.<sup>2</sup> Three of the middle States, N. York, Delaware and Maryland, unrepresented. N. Carolina will be so in a Day or two. Complaints are so loud in Congress on this Subject, that Expresses are sent to N. York and Delaware, and I expect our assembly will be intreated to send their Delegates. It is not only necessary to be represented, but be assured the Business, the Interest of these States require a full Representation. We have not 30 Members in Congress, and it is not only improper, but impossible, for so small a Number to conduct so very important Business. Be pleased to communicate these my Sentiments to our General Assembly.

We hourly expect to hear of some important News from Camp.

I am, Gent., with Regard & Respect,

Saml. Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> Apparently sent in response to the council's January 27 letter to Chase requesting "thirty or forty thousand dollars." *Md. Archives*, 16:82-83.

<sup>2</sup> This subject is not mentioned in the journals this day. On February 7 Congress resolved to appoint general officers on February 17, but failed to complete the appointments until February 19 and 21. See *JCC*, 7:98, 131-33, 138-39, 141-42.

## Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull

Dear sir

Baltimore 31 Jany 1777

I find by your Favour of the 6th that the order for importg. Flower was at Hand; the other for Rice was sent by Capt Doughty. With respect to the Quantity, I think it was not the Intention of Congress to limit either. The affair of the Salt I think extraordinary, & what cannot be easily justified upon any principle of authority or Expediency. Inclosed is your Brothers Commission in Consequence of his Appointment as Dep. Ad. General; Mr. Han[c]ock informs me that he had sent One before & supposes it miscarried.<sup>1</sup> I am in Haste, sir, your very hum ser,

E Gerry

RC (Ct.)

<sup>1</sup> John Trumbull had been appointed deputy adjutant general in the northern department by Congress on September 12, 1776. *JCC*, 5:753. When Trumbull saw the date on his commission, he offered his resignation because he claimed that his appointment should have been dated June 28, 1776. See James Lovell to John Trumbull, March 22, 1777.

## John Hancock to the States

Gentlemen, (Circular) Baltimore Jany 31<sup>t</sup>. 1777.

As there is not a more distinguished Event in the History of America, than the Declaration of her Independence—nor any that in all Probability, will so much excite the Attention of future Ages, it is highly proper that the Memory of that Transaction, together with the Causes that gave Rise to it, should be preserved in the most careful Manner that can be devised.

I am therefore commanded by Congress to transmit you the enclosed Copy of the Act of Independence with the List of the several Members of Congress subscribed thereto—and to request, that you will cause the same to be put upon Record, that it may henceforth form a Part of the Archives of your State, and remain a lasting Testimony of your approbation of that necessary & important Measure.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble  
Servant, J H Presidt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See the January 18 resolve on this issue in *JCC*, 7:48. Hancock sent each of the states a broadside copy of the Declaration printed by Mary Katharine Goddard of Baltimore. Evans, *Am. Bibliography*, no. 15650.

## Francis Lewis to John McKesson

Dear Sir, Baltimore, 31<sup>st</sup> January, 1777.

I have received your favour of the 17<sup>th</sup> instant, and am concerned to find that the appointment of Colo. Warner should give umbrage to any gentlemen in our State.<sup>1</sup> When it was moved in Congress, several objections were made to the motion; it was at length put to the vote, when a majority appeared to be for the question. This I can venture to assure you, that in all debates of this kind, Congress seems determined to put all disputes between individuals, and even between States, about property, out of sight; as debates of this kind the last year, between the States of Connecticut and Pennsylvania, took up the whole attention of Congress, to the great detriment of the service, and to but very little effect. I am well satisfied in my own mind, that Congress has not the least idea, as a collective body, of suffering any State to be dismembered, whatever the secret views of individuals may be. But permit me to say, that to leave our State so long unrepresented in Congress is a fault; when I observe to you that the four New-England States always keep a full representation; when, in some debates, those States may be injured who are not represented; Congress has often complained to me of this neglect, and indeed urged it in

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776.  
THE UNANIMOUS  
DECLARATION  
OF THE  
THIRTEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

H. In the Course of human Events, it becomes necessary for one People to dissolve the Political Bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the Powers of the Earth, the separate and equal Station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them; a decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind requires that they should declare the Causes which impel them to the Separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator, with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.—That to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on just Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Manner, as shall best secure to them the most extensive, safe, and secure Possession of those Rights, which, by the just and lawful Constitutions of Governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient Causes; accordingly all Experience bears witness, that Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while actually oppressed, than to redress their grievances by abolishing the Forms to which they are accustomed; but when long Run of abuses accumulates, when many more are experienced than borne, when a long Train of Abuses and Misuses grows up, and the same Object is thus to be attained, by a total Reformation of the whole, a prudent People, who shall thus be led to discern the Necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government, will support the Measures which are taken for that Purpose with a more than usual Firmness.

To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid World.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public Good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing Importance, unless suspended in their Operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend on them.

He has called together Legislative Bodies at Places usual, uncomfortable, and distant from the Depository of their public Records, for the sole Purpose of fatiguing them into Compliance with his Measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly Fumnel, his Invasions on the Rights of the People.

He has refused for a long Time, after such Dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative Powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining, in the mean Time, exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and Confusions within.

He has endeavored to prevent the Population of these States; for that Purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migration hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriators of Lands. He has influenced the Administration of Justice, he refused his Agent to trans-

\* He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the Treasure of their Offices, and the Amount and Payment of their Salaries.

He has erected a Multitude of new Offices, and sent hither Swarms of Officers to har-  
 ress our People, and eat out their Substance.

He has kept among us, in Times of Peace, Standing Armies, without the Consent of our Legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil Power.  
He has combined with others to subject us to a Jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution,

John

( Boston Greenwich, George Wythe,

GEORGIA, } Lyman Hall,  
Geo. Walton. } Richard Henry Lee,  
Th. Jefferson.

and unacknowledged by our Laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

Has quartering large Bodies of Armed Troops among us :  
For preventing them, by a weak Troop, from the

204 protecting them, by a mock Trial, from Punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of their States:

For cutting off our Trade with all Parts of the World:  
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:  
For destroying us in many Places, by the savage and

For depriving us, & many Cases, of the Benefits of Trial by Jury:  
For transporting us beyond Seas so be tried for pretended Offences

For abolishing the Fee System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an arbitrary Government, and enlarging its Boundaries, so as to render it at

once an Example and an Instrument for introducing the same absolute Rule into their Colonies.

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with Power to legislate for us in all Cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection, and waging War against us.

He has plundered our Seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our Towns, and destroyed the Lives of our People.

He is, at this time, transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to complete the Works of Death, Debauchery, and Tyranny, already begun with Circumstances of Cruelty and Perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous Ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized Nation.

He has constrained our Fellow-Citizens, taken Captive on the high Seas, to bear Arms against their Country, to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to sell themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction, of all ages, sexes, and conditions.

Terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated Injury. A Prince, whose Character is thus marked by every Act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be

Now have we been wanting in Attention to our British Brethren. We have warned them, from time to time, of Attempts by their Legislators to extend an unwarrantable

We have reminded them of the Circumstances of our Emigration and Settlement here. We have appealed to their native Justice and Magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the Ties of our common Kindred to disavow these Unhappy Measures, which would inevitably interrupt our Connections and Correspondence. They too have been deaf to the Voice of Justice and of Consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the Necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the

*John Hancock.*

GEORGIA,	<i>Benjamin Constantine, Darius Hall, Gen. Hays.</i>	VIRGINIA,	<i>George Wythe, George Rogers Lee, Thos. Jefferson, Bapt. Harrison, Thos. Nelson, Francis Lightfoot Lee, Carver Braxton.</i>	DELAWARE,	<i>Charles Rodney, Gen. Read.</i>	MASSACHUSETTS,	<i>Saml. Adams, Thos. Adams, John Adams, Loring Garry.</i>
NORTH CAROLINA,	<i>Wm. Hooper, Thos. Maitland, John Penn.</i>			NEW YORK,	<i>W. Ford, John Livingston, John Lewis, Leah Morris.</i>	PROVIDENCE AND PROVIDENCE, R. I.	<i>Steph. Hays, William Hays.</i>
SOUTH CAROLINA,	<i>Edmund Rutledge, Thos. Heyward, junr. Thomas Paul, junr. Arthur Middleton.</i>		<i>Ralph Morris, Benjamin Paul, John Franklin, John Marston, Gen. Clarke, Thos. Smith, Gen. Tarver, Thos. Wright, Gen. Hill.</i>	PENNSYLVANIA,	<i>Ralph Spaulding, John Witherspoon, Fra. Mifflin, Thos. Lane, Abra. Clark.</i>	CONNECTICUT,	<i>Ezra Sherman, Sam. Huntington, Wm. Williams, Cyrus Huggins.</i>
MARYLAND,	<i>Samuel Chase, Wm. Paten, Thos. Stone, Charles Carroll, of Col. Talbot.</i>			NEW HAMPSHIRE,	<i>Josh. Bartlett, Thos. Wright, Matthew Thornton.</i>		

IN CONGRESS, JANUARY 18, 1777.

ORDERED, IN CONGRESS, JANUARY 18, 1777.  
THAT an authenticated Copy of the DECLARATION of INDEPENDENCY, with the Names of the MEMBERS of CONGRESS, subscribing the same, be sent to each of the UNITED STATES, and that they be desired to have the same put on RECORD.

By Order of CONGRESS,

JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*

BALTIMORE, IN MARYLAND, FILMED BY MARY KATHARINE GUERARD.

Goddard Broadside of the Declaration of Independence



their public resolves, but to no effect hitherto; I hope the Convention will speedily remedy this evil. I have for these six weeks past been the only member to represent our State in Congress. Let me beg you would make this known to the Convention, and believe me to be sincerely, Dear sir,  
Your very humb. servt. \* F. Lewis.

MS not found; reprinted from *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:378.

<sup>1</sup> The New York Committee of Safety was apprehensive that by appointing Col. Seth Warner, who was identified with the "Green Mountain Boys," to command a regiment in New York, Congress was encouraging the separatist aspirations of Vermont. On June 30 Congress emphatically denied that it had appointed Warner for this reason. *Ibid.*, 1:775-76; and *JCC*, 8:510.

## Francis Lewis to the New York Convention

Dear Sir,

Baltimore, 31st Jany. 1777.

My last was of the 16th inst. to the Honourable the Convention, in answer to your favour of the 1st current. I therein advised the urgent necessity of sending a sufficient number of Delegates to represent our State in Congress; myself being the only member attending for above six weeks past, our State has been deprived of their vote on questions, in my opinion, of some consequence; and although Congress endeavours to avoid partiality as a collective body, yet it will imperceptibly steal into the minds of individuals, perhaps, without their thinking so. Permit me to observe that the four New-England States are always represented.

My last informed the Convention of the arrival of the armed sloop Montgomery, Capt. Rogers, with two prizes, vizt. a brigantine and schooner in this harbour. I have procured libels to be filed against both, and the 10th day of February was appointed for trial. I shall assist Capt. Rogers to obtain condemnation, but learn that the brigantine's cargo, consisting of about 3000 bushels of salt, will be claimed as the property of an inhabitant of this town. The schooner's cargo is valuable, and as some articles, vizt. cheese, &c. are perishable, I have obtained leave to land the cargo under the care of the Continental agent for this State. I am informed there is woollens sufficient to clothe a battalion, which I shall reserve until I receive the orders of Convention; there is also about £400 sterling worth of fine Irish linen, much too fine for soldier's shirts; these I would advise to have sold here, together with such other articles not suitable for the troops, as they will in my opinion, yield a better price here than elsewhere, and the sailors will want money. I have advised Capt. Rogers to fit out his sloop for another cruise, as soon as possible. Should you order any of the articles to your State, they must be conveyed by land, as two English frigates with two tenders are lying at the capes.

At foot you have an abstract of the schooner's cargo, collected from the cockets, the invoice being destroyed.

I have the honor to be, sir, Your obedt. humb. servt. F. Lewis

Schooner Hannah's Cargo, vizt:

- 12 barrels and 10 half barrels of barley.
- 23 tierces, 26 barrels, 7 ankers, 25 firkins beef.
- 21 casks raisins, say 21 casks.
- 1 cask neats' tongues.
- 4 tierces and 19 barrels peas.
- 36 kegs pickled tripe.
- 5 firkins butter.
- 33 coils cordage.
- 15 hhds. beer.
- 30 bundles sheathing paper.
- 1 hhd. glassware.
- 4 cross cut saws.
- 1 puncheon and 1 barrel shoes.
- 7 bales woollens.
- 1 puncheon 2 boxes and 3 bales woolens.
- 1 bale osnaburgs.
- 6 bales and 33 loose bolts canvas.
- 1 barrel pork, 1 cask lampblack.
- 2 cases mustard, 1 box spices.
- 1 case buttons and trimmings.
- 1 case pickles, 3 chests Florence oil.
- 3 bundles twine.
- 112 cheeses, 1 keg nails.
- 50 hampers red port wine.
- 1 pack cinnamon.
- 2 boxes pipes, and a parcel of oakum.

N.B. Several of the woollens and linens being wet, it became necessary to open them.

Brigantine Minerva's Cargo.

3000 bushels salt, and 1 puncheon rum.

P.S. Please to inform the superintendent for the frigates, that I learn anchors may be got of one Forbes at Cannain who makes them, and is not far from Hudson's river; none to be got here, and at Philadelphia they are fully employed for their own vessels.

MS not found; reprinted from *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:378. Addressed: "To the Hon Abraham Ten Broeck, President of the Convention of the State of New-York, at Fishkill."

## Massachusetts Delegates to the Massachusetts Council

Sir

Baltimore 31st Jany 1777

The Removal of Congress to this Place, & the Interruption occasioned thereby in the affairs of the Treasury, have prevented an early Reimbursement of the Money applied for by the State of Massachusetts Bay. An Order was obtained at Philadelphia for £50,000 lawful, which with 300,000 Dollars for supplying the military Chest of the eastern Department, & payment of the Bounties to the new Levies of your State, will be sent from hence in about ten Days.<sup>1</sup> We have obtained an Order on the Loan Office at Boston for £50,000 in Addition to the Sums already mentioned, which will be sent by the president & compleats the £100,000 required by the State.<sup>2</sup> We are concerned to find that the Interest on the Certificates must continue at the Rate of 4 per Cent, being fully persuaded that this unreasonable Oeconomy will impede the Success of the Loan, & burthen the Continent with a greater Expence by the Depreciation that will result from further Emissions.

The Measures wisely adopted by the Convention of the New England States are transmitted to Congress by Governor Trumbull, & a Day is appointed for considering the same, when a similar Mode for giving Stability to the Currency will probably be recommended to the southern & middle Departments of the Continent.<sup>3</sup>

We think it necessary to suggest to the honorable assembly, that in Consequence of the Commission with which they have lately honored us, providing that "any three or more" of their Delegates shall be present to make a Representation, the State has been several Days unrepresented & Congress has once been obliged to adjourn.<sup>4</sup> The Inconveniences from the first cannot be better stated than by mentioning, that the Question on raising the Interest of the Certificates was lost by the Indisposition of one of the Massa. Members, & the want of a Vote consequent thereon. When anything material to the State occurs We shall pay due attention thereto being sir with great Respect, Yours & the General Assembly's most humble serts,

Samuel Adams

Elbridge Gerry

RC (M-Ar). Addressed: "Hona. James Bowdoin Esq. president of the Council of Massachusetts Bay." Written by Gerry and signed by Gerry and Samuel Adams.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 6:973, 7:28; Samuel Adams to James Warren, January 16, 1777, note 1; and John Hancock to James Betton et al., February 11, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:75.

<sup>3</sup> See John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., January 30, 1777, note.

<sup>4</sup> Congress probably did not have a quorum on January 27, when it met and abruptly adjourned. *JCC*, 7:64. For further discussion of alterations to the Massachusetts delegates' credentials, see Samuel Adams to James Warren, January 16, 1777, note 2.

## Robert Morris to Silas Deane

Dear Sir

Philada. Jany 31st. 1777

I am exceedingly uneasy at a letter received last night from my Friend Mr. James Duff of Cadiz respecting my Brother. He tells me that he had regularly Corresponded with him from the time he arrived in Europe untill he went over to England & that from that time he never answered his letters altho they contained business of moment and I am likely to suffer considerably by the Neglect. He adds that his expences were growing very extravagant & in short gives me reason to suppose his Conduct is not right. Circumstanced as I now am with him You may suppose this gives me a most serious alarm. He had been Frolicksom & foolish many times as a Boy, but as I never knew him to depart from principles of honor & integrity in his wildest days, I never entertained a doubt of his becoming an excellent Character in the progress of his Manhood. These Considerations and the good accounts given of him by all my Friends in Spain & Italy induced me not only to commit to his care my own private business in which he is a partner, but to recommend him to the Superintendancy of the Public business as you will have seen heretofore and I know also that he has good mercantile abilities if he will but exercise them properly. However this letter from Mr Duff alarms me most exceedingly as it will make me most unhappy if the Public business shou'd have suffered by this appointment. I have hopes that on receiving my letters he wou'd instantly repair to France, consult you in all things and act under your guidance. If this shou'd be the case I shall be happy, if it is not, much shall I feel on the occasion, however I give you this notice of my alarm the moment I have received it that either his neglect & or abuse of the Trust reposed in him, if any there be, may be remedied the soonest that is possible and I am to inform you that the Secret Committee have agreed to join Alderman William Lee Esqr, late of London, now supposed to be in France, with my Brother in this Commission. Therefore you can immediately give him Notice of it and letters authorizing him to Act will follow this immediately; at present there is not time for it, neither are the rest of the Secret Committee here. I have by this Conveyance wrote to my Friend Mr. John Ross of this place now in Europe (I expect in France) giving him a full account of this affair and authorizing him if he finds my Brother to have been faulty, immediately to get from him all letters & papers that regard the Public or my own business together with a Power of atty from my Brother to Act in his name & behalf until such time as a proper arrangement shall take place. Mr. Ross unluckily is a Scotch Man, but he is a Staunch American or I am much deceived. He was many years my Neighbour. We have done a great deal of business together and I know him to be a capable steady merchant, regular and punctual, therefore I most cheerfully commit my own affairs to his guidance & the Public will benefit by any direction he may have in theirs. I recommend this Gentn



to your Friendship but as to Politics you'l use your own discretion in trusting him or not as he is from North of Tweed, but I am confident he is a fast Friend to the interest of this Country, indeed it is his own interest to be so. Shou'd Mr Ross be in France when you receive this he will do the needfull immediately; if he is not there you will take the proper care of all public effects untill he comes. At the same time I must flatter myself with the hope that my present fears are needless. This will be delivered you by Capt Thos Bell whom I have sent over with the Public dispatches to you (Gentn Commissioners) and herein you will find enclosed a letter directed to my Brother left open & dated the 29th Inst.<sup>1</sup> before I had any reason to doubt his Prudence. By this you will find I have procured Capt Bell a Commission for a Privateer & that my Friend Mr Jno Maxwell Nesbit is to be interested therein to the Amount of One Thousand pounds Sterling and myself to the same amount & that we proposed you & my Brother shou'd make up the rest of the concern to compleat such a Cruizer as you shou'd deem best calculated for success. If my Brother is doing what he ought to do and has your approbation to his Conduct he may still go on with this business. If the reverse Mr Ross can do it well or you may appoint any other person that you think proper, but as Capt Bell goes so long a Voyage for this purpose & you have encouraged the plan he must not be disappointed. I have Shipped some Tobacco by the ship he goes in consigned to Messrs. Pliarne, Penet & Compy with orders to sell it to the best advantage and to comply with your orders to the amount of One Thousand Pounds Sterling which is to pay for my interest in this Privateer. Mr. Nesbit says he has some bills but not enough for his share, he expects to have some money in my Brothers hand from a former consignment & he will send forward other effects soon to make it up. He is a Man of honor & Fortune and may be depended on; therefore do not let him be disappointed & to prevent it I have now directed that Messrs. Pliarne, Penet & Co shou'd Account with you for the whole net proceeds of 86 hhds of Tobo by this Ship which I hope will neat above £20 stg per hhd. If Mr Ross fits the Privateer you can transfer this order to him, if my Brother does it transfer it to him & if the whole is not wanted only take so much as is required leaving the remainder with Messrs Pliarne, Penet & Co for future orders. There are four hhds of Furs onboard this Ship also consigned to these Gentn. They are for Public account and the net proceeds to be remitted to you. Originally they were ordered to My Brother as well as the Tobacco but I have altered the orders to Messrs Pliarne & Co without mentioning the cause. Youl observe that the Car-goes that have geen dispatched from America for Europe consigned to the order of Mr. Thos. Morris have all been directed to Messrs. Pliarne, Penet & Co at Nantes, Messrs. Saml & J.H. Delap at Bourdeaux & one to Mr. Andw Limozin at Havre de Grace, unless he has fixed other agents in those & other Ports since he received his appointment. Therefore you can readily come at all that have arrived for if he has attended his duty he

will know and give acct thereof. If he has not the Cargoes & his letters must remain with the above Houses unless they have sent the letters & made the remittances to you, and in that case you will deliver all the letters that regard my Houses private Concerns to Mr Ross, also any money or effects that may have come into your hands in consequence of them. I put 100 hhds of Tobo. on their acct onbd the Ship Aurora from Virginia & 50 hhds onbd the ship Farmer, Capt Dashed, from Maryld both for Nantes directed to Messrs Pliarne & Co. but Consigned to the order of Mr Thos. Morris. The rest of the Cargoes were on Public account. I hope to be relieved from this state of anxiety I am suddenly thrown into by the imprudence of one that I am very desirous of serving and have taken much pains to make a valuable good Man. God send he may yet turn out such. I beg my Compts to Doctr Franklin. I am impatient to hear of his safe arrival and shall be very happy when that good News reaches us. I am with sincere Regard & esteem Dr sir, Your affectionate Friend & Obedt hble servant,

Robt Morris

P.S. If you have made any Commercial engagements in which I am interested you may depend on punctual compliance on my part and I shall push away remittances on Public Account fast as possible.<sup>2</sup>

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> The range of Morris' activities, which often combined essentially private with public interests, is also illustrated in an intercepted letter he wrote the preceding day in behalf of himself and fellow Philadelphia merchant Jacob Winey. "The Ship Lord Camden," he wrote to master George Geddis, "of which you are appointed Commander has long been loaden with a Cargo of Tobacco, flour & Iron, but as there now seems to be a chance of getting safe out to Sea You are immediately to repair onboard and proceed direct for Nantes in France and on your arrival there report that you are bound for Holland but called in for orders. You are to apply to Mr. John Danl Schwieghauzer Mercht there & deliver him the letter given you herewith. He will then receive the Cargo with all possible expedition, and in Return he will put onboard a Cargo of Salt for which you are to sign bills of Loading for the same Consigned to me take in as much as will put the Ship into a good deep Set of ballast but not too deep for sailing. Mr Schweighawser will supply you with what may be needfull for Disbursmts & Charges in which we beg You will be as Moderate as possible. When your business is finished at Nantes you are to proceed with the utmost dilligence back to this port, unless during the Cruze of the Voyage you shoud hear that the British are in possession of it & in that case or if you are chased from our Capes you must then make the first safe Harbour that you can & give us immediate Notice of Your safe arrival. There are two thousand Staves onboard which you must sell on the Ships account & the money will help to pay charges. You will also be attentive in delivering the Cargo as we imagine there is one hhd more onboard than is in the bills of Loading & if so you'l take Mr. Schweighausers rect for it, indeed you must do this for all you deliver. As you carry some passengers with you, use them well & they will add to the safety of the Voyage by preventing any bad attempts of the Seamen. We depend on your care of the Ship her Materials & Stores & on your zeal to serve and promote our Interest, & in return you may depend we shall not be backward to reward you well for Serving us faithfully. Shou'd it be your misfortune to fall into the hands of the Enemy be sure to

destroy all the letters we give you as well as these orders which we would not choose shou'd fall into their hands on any account, but you must carefully avoid all vessells at Sea & then we hope you will make a safe & successful voyage which we most sincerely wish & are sir, your obedt hble servts, Robt Morris, Jacob Winey." -

Notwithstanding Morris' injunction to destroy "these orders," "shou'd it be your misfortune to fall into the hands of the Enemy," Geddis obviously failed to do so. Morris' and Winey's January 30; 1777, letter to Geddis is in High Court of Admiralty Papers, 32:391, pt 2, PRO.

## Robert Morris to Thomas Morris

Sir

Philadelphia Jany. 31. 1777

All the Letters I have written you since we parted to this Date have been in that stile of Affection, which I was in hopes you would ever merit. Sorry I am indeed to suppose there is any Cause for Changing it & the only alleviation I can have of the trouble you now perplex me with, will be to find that your Conduct will be less blameable than at present I have reason to suppose. Your friend Mr. James Duff writes me the 17th Novr. that you had Corresponded with him regularly from the time you arived in Europe until your arival in London, but from that Period you had never answered his Letters, altho some of them were on business of Consequence respecting the Brig. Grenada Packet, Voyage which for aught I Know remains in that Port to this hour waiting for your Answer. He says also that you had nearly expended his Credit in your favour on Messrs. Herries & Co. for one thousand Pounds sterling & that they hinted to him you had beside other resources. These Circumstances & your total Silence to me, give me the most horrid presages of what I am to expect. Nevertheless it is possible that my friendly Letter, & the unlimited Confidence I repose in you, may have drawn forth the virtuous part of your Constitution into Exertion, & you may have stepped forth & done your Duty to the Public & to your friends; happy will it be for us both if you have but when I look the Contrary way the Picture shocks all my feelings & I cannot bear it. Your follies as a boy I always forgave, expecting one day to see you despise them, & reap the fruits of your Abilities; but if you have introduced them into the European World in the Character of man and a merchant, I fear it will all be over & that your future prospects must be Gloomy indeed. This goes under Cover to my friend Mr. Jno. Ross, whom I have requested to join you immediately after the receipt of it, to examine strictly into your Conduct & if he finds you have either abused or neglected your Duty in the Public or Private Trusts I have reposed in you, that he should immediately receive from you all the Public & Private Letters you have received from me, from our House, from the Secret Committee, or from any other Persons in consequence of the business you have been charged with and I now strictly Charge & injoin you to deliver them all up to him & to grant him a Power of Attorney to act & do what may be right in all those affairs

that have been Committed to you. I desire you will deliver him up all the moneys, or Effects that you have in Hand of ours, my W. M. Co., or mine & the accounts, Bonds, Bills or Notes of those with whom you have deposited any part thereof & I also desire that you will write Letters to our Several Correspondants in England desiring them to settle their accounts with him instead of you, informing them that you are about to return. Stay with Mr. Ross so long as he may think it necessary or proper & when he judges it best take your passage & come over here that I may give you one chance more of retrieving your Character, & establishing yourself in the World. Unhappy to the last degree in being to write you in this Stile & can hardly find freedom to add that I look on you with Pitying Eyes for I was once your affectionate Friend &c.<sup>1</sup> Robert Morris

Tr (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> For additional references to the fall of Thomas Morris, see Committee of Secret Correspondence to Silas Deane, August 7, 1776, note 2.

## Robert Morris to John Ross

My Dear Friend

Philadelphia Jany. 31st. 1777

I have now the unhappiness to address you on a subject that distresses me exceedingly. You may probably be acquainted with the cause, but Twas not until last night, when I recd. a Letter from our Mutual friend Mr. James Duff of Cadiz informing me that my Brother had regularly Corresponded with him until he arrived in London, & from that time he never Answered his Letters, although they were wrote in the Warmest stile of Friendship, & one of them Contained particularly some matters of business, respecting the Voyage of the Brig. Grenada Packet waiting at Cadiz for his reply which he never gave. He adds that his Expences had Amounted to near £1000 Sterling taken up on the Credit he had given him & that besides this Messrs. Herries on whom he drew seemed to think he had other resources, & it seems all our Correspondents have complained they could never see him. These are alarming Circumstances, to which I may add my not having heard from him since he left Marseilles altho I have seen those that saw him in London, & frequently heard of him. His Letters from Cadiz, Gibralter & Marseilles with the good accounts given of him by all our friends in that quarter, induced me to believe he had discarded all his follies, & I determined to win him to the pursuit of his own good, by placing an intire Confidence in him. I do not even now entertain any doubts of his integrity, but if his weakness is so prevalent, that no dependance can be had on him, I must 'een get him back here & let him go into our Army. My dependance is now upon you my good friend; wherever you are when you receive this Letter, I beg you will Post away immediately to him. If he be in France examine into his Conduct to the



very bottom, and if you find he has received my sundry Letters & those of the Secret Committee, examine Closely what he has done in Consequence of them. Should you find those Letters have brought him to a proper Sense of his Duty, & that he is acting as he should do, then Confirm him in the Practice of it, but if on the Contrary you find he has in this neglected or abused the Trust I have reposed in him either Public or Private, in such Case deliver him the inclosed Letter of this date & oblige him to deliver you all the Letters I have wrote to him both public & Private. Let him also give you a Power of Attorney to act in all those affairs in his Stead, or on his behalf. Get from him all the Money or Effects he has whether Public or private & send him Home to me by the first Conveyance that you think safe. Should he have been led into this foolish Conduct by the Apprehensions of blame for having spent too much money, I can readily overlook that, provided he has since discharged his Duty to the Public & to our House, of which you will be able to judge & must Act accordingly. But even in that Case I wish you to remain in France, and either join him in the Prosecution of such business as I shall procure for you, or else send him here, where he can be exceedingly useful to me, & you act for him in all things until I can arrange matters properly in Consequence of this very heavy disappointment. I shall mention my fears to Mr. Deane & if you are not in France will desire him to take Care of the Public affairs, but Ours, W.M. & Co. I rely on you altogether for, and am Dear Sir, Your Affectionate Humb Servt. Robt. Morris

P.S. If you find it necessary write to all our friends in Europe not to Supply him, or pay him any money—tell them I desired you to do it.

Tr (CtHi).

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Jany 31st. 1777

I have been honoured with several of your favours lately but as they did not require an immediate acknowledgement and I have been much pressed with business it did not appear necessary to interrupt you or myself. We are told here the Troops have left Rhode Island & burnt Newport. How true this I do not know, but it is Certain they had embarked part of the Troops there before a Mr McCleary lately from thence came away, wherefore I expect it will soon be known where they are to reinforce.

I wrote to Congress respecting the removal of the Stores from hence. They are averse to it unless absolutely necessary but as the Acct we then gave of Genl. Putnams Force at Prince Town was too Sanguine I will mention it again and be governed by their orders for I confess I think such

removal at this time would have a bad effect & retard many usefull operations.<sup>1</sup>

I take the Liberty to enclose you the Copy of a letter from Hugh Wallace Esqr of New York to Mr Nesbitt here and hope it may be in your Excellencys power to Save his property for altho he has the misfortune to differ from us in Politics yet if he does not take an active part I conceive it is not right to Confiscate his property. I do [*not?*] know any such instance hitherto. Here are Capt Jones & several other people in this City that want to go into New York. I wish they was there for they poison our peoples minds daily. I think it best to send Jones in on parole because Capt Hamond sent up Capt Hallock of the Lexington on those terms & if Your Excellency thinks proper I will propose an exchange between those two. The other persons we don't hold as prisoners being taken in Merchantmen but I wou'd put them all under parole & send them by Crosswix to South Amboy & let them Cross from thence. I think it can do no harm, & they do much mischief here. Amongst the Number is also Mr. Palmer Commissary of Provisions &c under Mr Chamier who will get in Exchange a Capt Deane asked for by the Councill of Safety or any other you please to Name, or return back. I have a Ship arrived in our Bay with 10000 bushels of Salt but unfortunately she is run aground. I am sending down assistance & hope to Save her. By her I got King George's Speech & you Will find a Copy enclosed.<sup>2</sup> I have no doubt of a Rupture in Europe this next Summer & his Majesty seems to entertain some doubts about it. With the warmest Wishes for Your Success I am sir Your obedt Servt.

Robt Morris

P.S. I laid your letter respecting the arms &c delivered to associators before the Council of Safety & your plan must be adopted.

You will please to receive herewith Mr Commissary Towers's returns of Arms & Ammunition & we will Continue to furnish you with them.

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:66.

<sup>2</sup> George III's October 31, 1776, address to Parliament is in *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:961-62.

## Robert Morris to James Wilson

Dear Sir

Philada. Jany 31st. 1777

Do not blame me for letting so much time elapse before I reply to your favour of the 14th Inst. for I have many good reasons to plead in excuse but one insurmountable one may suffice; I really cou'd not do it. Agreeable to your desire I have considered the plan of the office you propose and the first view convinced me of its utility, but here am I a very slave, far from Baltimore and consequently unable to promote what I wish, for it

is a subject that will not do for a Public letter. When I shall join the Congress, or when they will return here is quite uncertain but this you may assure yourself that my judgement approves the plan & my Friendship prompts me to comply with your wishes and if it ever lies in my power I will most readily convince you of this truth. I think Hooper wou'd be a proper hand to broach this plan and if Jay & Johnston attended the Congress they shou'd back it. This may happen before long and I shall rejoice to see it, for I am told our assembly do not intend you shall be in the New List of Delegates.<sup>1</sup> I am too busy to attend or I wou'd Contest the matter warmly altho I well know, that the Honesty, merit & ability which you possess in so eminent a degree wou'd not be sufficient pleas against the previous determination of a Strong party for that I am told is the case. However you will enjoy your Family & Friends at home if you are deprived the opportunity of Continuing those Services to your Country which she so much needs & which if I mistake not she will feel the want of, untill better Men in better times shall call you forth again. I am Dr sir, Your obedt hble servant, Robert Morris

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wilson was indeed dropped from Pennsylvania's list of delegates when the assembly named a new five-man delegation on February 5, but he was reappointed on February 22. See Page Smith, *James Wilson, Founding Father, 1742-1798* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1956), pp. 99-102; and Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush, January 24, 1777, note 1.

## Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush

My dearest Julia,

Baltimore Januy 31 1777.

This is the 4th letter I have written to you since my Arrival in this place. I have received One from You which gave me great pleasure. In my former letters I gave you a general Acct. of my Situation. I shall now add to it, that after spending a week in the house of a Mrs. Orrick in a room formerly occupied by Mr Seargeant I was obliged to look out for other lodgings upon Mr. Seargeants return. I am now very comfortably situated with a Mrs Payne. Mr Seargant was so much pleased with my landlady and the accommodations which her house afforded that he has left his old quarters, and now lodges with me. There are a number of boarders in the family. One of them is a young French Officer. His history in one particular is very remarkable. He is one of one & twenty children, 18 boys & three girls. They were all born of the same father & mother, and are all now living. Happy family! I shall be better satisfied if the same can be said [of] me as was said of the prophet of old "That I walked in the fear of the Lord, and begat sons & daughters," than if it were inscribed upon my tombstone that I governed the counsels, or commanded the arms of the whole continent of America.

Every article of provision—cloathing and the common conveniences of life are 100 percent higher in this place than in Philadelphia. I pay 50/ a week for my board, and 2/6 a day for my horse. I cannot reconcile these prices with the plenty of provisions for man & beast with which this part of the country abounds. The market contains besides the ordinary provisions found in the Philada. market a great variety of fish and wild fowl.

The town of Baltimore contains about 1000 houses—most of them large & built with brick. It is divided into two parts distant from each other about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile. Both divisions are situated upon Petapsco river about 15 miles above Chesapeake bay. The water of the river is a good deal Brackish, and even the water of the pumps & wells in the town is not wholly free from a Saltish taste. The town used to contain near 5000 inhabitants before the present war. You will be surprised when I add to this account of Baltimore that the first house in it was built not more than 30 years ago. It has for some years past vied with Philadelphia in commerce, and bids fair for being the most wealthy spot on the continent.

I expect to set off tomorrow to pay a visit to Dr Howard an old fellow student of mine in the College of Edin[burgh].<sup>1</sup> He lives 15 miles from this place. I have as yet contracted no acquaintances with the inhabitants of the town. I associate only with delegates, & attend only to the business of the congress.

I forgot to inform you before that when the acct. came to the congress of your Papa's harsh treatment by General Howe, they immediately ordered General Washington to remonstrate against it, and to threaten to inflict similar indignities upon some tory prisoners.

My pen and paper are intollerable. I hope to write to you more fully by the next post. Love to all Mr Montgomery's family. Adieu my dearest—  
yours—yours—yours,

B Rush

RC (MdHi: Middendorf deposit, 1972).

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly Ephraim Howard of Elkridge, Anne Arundel Co., Md. See Rush, *Letters* (Butterfield), 1:132–33.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Baltimore Feb 1st 1777

The Proceedings of the Committees of the four New England States have been read in Congress, and are now under the Consideration of a Committee of the whole. They are much applauded as being wise and salutary.<sup>1</sup> I had heard that one of your Delegates at that Convention had written a long Letter to his Friend and *Confident* here; and hearing it whisperd, that the Massachusetts State had disapprovd of those Proceedings, I was led to ask the Gentleman who had receivd the Letter, concerning it.<sup>2</sup> He confirmd it; and said, that not only the Trade, but the



Landed Gentlemen in the House of Representatives were sanguine against it. I beggd him to let me see his Letter; but he refusd in a kind of Pet, telling me it was a *private* Letter. I was left to conjecture, whether I had been really impertinent in asking a Sight of his Letter, or whether the Contents of it were such as it was not proper for me to see. You will easily conceive what a Scituation one must be in here, who having receivd no Intelligence himself, of the Sentiments of his Constituents, is obligd in vain to ask of another, upon what Principles they have disapprovd of a Measure (if indeed they did dissapprove of it) upon which he is called to give his own Opinion. But it is difficult to account for means peevish humors, and it is generally not worth ones while to attempt it. You see, my Friend from this Instance, the Necessity of your writing to me oftener. When I was told upon the forementiond Occasion, that I would be intitled to see the Letters of Another; whenever I should be disposd to communicate those which I receive my self, I could have said truly that I had scarcely receivd any. Two only *from you* in the Space of near four Months. But I have no Claim to your Favors, however much I value them, unless perhaps upon the Score of my having not neglected to write to you by any opportunity. Your omitting of late even to acknowledge the Receipt of my Letters, I might indeed construe as a silent Hint that they were displeasing to you. But I will not believe this till I have it under your own Hand.

While I am writing, your very acceptable Letter is brought to me by Mr Lovell.<sup>3</sup> You therein speak, as you ever have done, the Language of my Soul. Mr Adams tells me you are President of the Board of War; I am therefore induced to recall what I have just now said, which you may construe as an implied Censure for your not having written to me oftener. I am sure you must have a great Deal of Business. I am not sorry for it, for a Reason which I need not mention. I pray God to preserve the Health of your Body and the vigor of your Mind. We must chearfully deny our selves Domestick Happiness and the Tranquility of private Life when our Country demands our Services.

Give me Leave to hint to you my opinion, that it would be a Saving to our State in the Way of Supplys, if the Board of War would consign the Cargoes which they order here to a Mercht of good Character rather than to the Masters of the Vessels. Possibly there may be some Exceptions. But I have Reason to think that a Cargo which arrivd about a Fortnight ago, consisting as I am told, chiefly of Rum and Sugar which were scarce Articles, was sold at least 30 per cent under what it would have fetchd, if it had been under the Direction of a Person acquainted in the Place, and Flour is purchasing by the Person who bo't the Cargo, and I suppose expects an Allowance therefor, at an unlimited Price. I am perswaded, if you had by a previous Letter directed a Cargo to be procured, you might have had it 20 per cent cheaper. If the Board should be of my Mind, I know of no Gentlemen whom I would more freely recommend than Mess

Samuel and Robert Purviance. They are Merchants of Character, honest and discrete Men and warmly attachd to our all important Cause. But I get out of my Line when I touch upon Commerce. It is a Subject which I never understood. Adieu my dear Friend. Beleive me to be yours,  
S A

P.S. I forgot to tell you that, a fair occasion offering, I movd in Congress that the Eldest Son of our dearest Freind Genl Warren might be adopted by the Continent & educated at the publick Expence. The Motion was pleasing to all & a Come is appointed to prepare a Resolve. Monuments are also proposd in Memory of him & Genl Mercer whose youngest Son is also to be adopted & educated.<sup>4</sup> But these things I would not have yet made publick.<sup>5</sup>

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> See John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, January 30, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> It cannot be determined with certainty to whom Adams was referring, but John Hancock may have received such a letter from Thomas Cushing. Cushing, Azor Orne, and Tristram Dalton were the Massachusetts delegates at the Providence meeting.

<sup>3</sup> Probably James Warren's December 31, 1776, letter to Samuel Adams, in *Warren-Adams Letters*, 2:441-44.

<sup>4</sup> On January 31 Congress appointed a committee "to see what honors are due" Gens. Joseph Warren and Hugh Mercer, who had been killed in action. On April 8 Congress voted to erect monuments to them and to adopt and educate Warren's eldest son and Mercer's youngest son. *JCC*, 7:79-80, 243.

<sup>5</sup> Adams also wrote a letter to his wife Elizabeth about this time, but only an undated fragment has been found. "Yet I would even by willing this Letter should fall into the Hands of General Howe, that from the Quotations I have made from yours he might see the unconquerable Spirit of a Boston Female. His deceased Brother, I am sure would have honord you for it; and if we could suppose it possible that so truly good a Nobleman as he was, could for a Moment be engagd in so unrighteous a Cause, as his surviving Brothers have undertaken to support, your Sentiments would have causd the Weapon to drop from his un-nerved Arm.

"We have the Speech of George the Third. I send it to you as the Printer has been pleasd to give it to us.

"I am exceedingly rejoiced to hear that Mrs March has recoverd her Health. Tell her I heartily congratulate her Friend upon so unexpected a Change in their Favor. . . .

"I have movd in Congress that the eldest Son of our worthy deceased Friend Dr. Warren may be an adopted Child of the Continent and educated at the publick Expence. The Members were pleasd with the Motion & a Committee is appointed to prepare a Resolve for the purpose. Communicate this only to a few Friends till you hear further of it." Adams Papers, NN.

## Board of War to James Scott

Sir,

Board of War Baltimore Feby. 1st. 1777.

I Recd. your Favor by Mr. John Barker and deliver'd yours to the President to be laid before Congress. They readily complyd with your Request

and Mr. Barker has Recd seven hundred Dollars to enable your Company to march which this Board have it Command to desire you will do with all possible Dispatch.<sup>1</sup> The sooner you arrive at Camp to assist our worthy General the greater will be your merit, and it will certainly add to the Pleasure Congress have already Recd from your readiness in turning out on this occasion. I am, Your most obedt Servt,

Benja Harrison Chairman  
of the Board of War

[P.S.] You must go by Philadelphia to be supplyd with arms. BH.

RC (CSmH). Written and signed by Benjamin Harrison.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:82. According to the journals, Scott was the "captain of a company of volunteer militia from Fauquier county."

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to William Bingham

Sir Baltimore in Maryland 1st Feby. 1777

As we shall write you shortly again our attention at present will be confined chiefly to your favor of Decemr. 6th 1776, in which you mention the misconduct of Capt. Patterson. We have laid your letter before Congress, and they have appointed a Committee to consider of the most proper steps to be taken in this business, that speedy and condign punishment may be applied to Captn. Patterson, when his crime shall be duly enquired into & established, The Congress having an utter abhorrence of all irregular & culpable violation of the law of nations, and that friendship & respect, which they entertain for the French Nation. We wish you would communicate this to their Excellencies the Governor & General of Martinique.<sup>1</sup> Congress has referred the matter of remittance for discharge of the obligation you & Mr. Harrison have entered into, to the State of Maryland, from whence you will no doubt receive remittance as soon as the British Ships of War now in Chesapeake Bay will permit. It is a singular misfortune to us, and very injurious to the Commerce of France, that we have not two or three line of Battle of Ships, which, with our Frigates and armed Vessels would keep open our navigation in despite of Great Britain, but at the present, one heavy Ship affords protection to two or three Frigates, that would otherwise be easily removed, and they place themselves so as to shut up the entrance into our principal trading States.

Prior to the Declaration of Independence, as it was not certain how soon our quarrel with Great Britain might be at an end, our Armies were enlisted for short periods, and Genl. Howe having received information

of the time, when the Troops would have it in their power to go home, seized that opportunity of marching through the Jersies. But his Career was stopt at the Delaware, and he has since paid severely for that visit. Since the 24th Decemr. the enemy have lost more than 2000 Men in killed & made Prisoners.

They have been obliged to recal their Troops from Rhode Island to defend New York from the attack of an army under Genl. Heath, and their whole forces in the Jersies is now collected on the Brunswick Heights, where they are nearly surrounded by General Washington's Army, and where they are greatly distressed for forage, fuel, and other necessaries.

They are mouldering away by deaths, desertions & captivity so that we hope to give a good account of this part of their army, before the Winter is over. We inclose you the late Newspapers for your perusal, and remain, Sir, Your most obedt. huml Servts.

Benj Harrison

Will Hooper

Richard Henry Lee

Robt Morris at Philada

RC (MdBj-G). In a clerical hand, and signed by Harrison, Hooper, Lee, and Morris.

<sup>1</sup> Bingham's December 6, 1776, letter, which has not been found, was laid before Congress on January 28. William Patterson, commander of the schooner *Dolphin*, was accused of capturing near St. Pierre, Martinique, an English ship bearing a flag of truce to the French Captain-General D'Argout, commanding at Martinique. Congress ordered that the papers concerning Capt. Patterson be "delivered to the delegates of Maryland, to be laid before the assembly of their state" and, in addition, that they be referred to a committee of Congress. However, Congress apparently took no further action on this case after reading a deposition from Patterson. The Maryland Council of Safety placed Patterson under arrest, sent for depositions from Martinique, and ordered the payment of £1500 in restitution. But by March, Patterson had resumed active service in the Maryland navy. See *JCC*, 7:66, 97; Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety, February 6, 1777; and *Maryland Archives*, 16:121, 127-28, 136, 151, 178, 212.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 1st. 1777

A Passenger that came over in the Ship from Cadiz is come up & brought with him a Manuscript Copy of the British Kings Speech and as he seems to be very angry at the Congress & others whom he calls Leaders we have taken a Copy & send it by the Post. His Majesty gives no such assurance this year of Peace as he did the last but rather seems to think it necessary to be prepared for War at Home.<sup>1</sup> I am sorry to add the ship with Salt is on shoar in our Bay.

The Board of War have given us their opinion that the Public Stores shou'd not be removed from hence, but this opinion being founded on



intelligence of the Numbers with Genl Putnam that exceeded greatly the reality we Still wish for further orders on this respect. We have no further advices from the Camp, since our last letter & therefore continue in opinion ourselves that it wou'd be impolitic to remove them untill some event shall point out more Strongly a necessity for doing it, however the orders of Congress Shall be implicitly obeyed. We have recd. 200,000 Dollars & lodged it with Mr Commissary Mease.<sup>2</sup> The paymaster Genl. Mr Palfrey has drawn on us for near 30,000 of it already not knowing of the sum gone forward to the Camp. He is at New Town & we shall inform him of that Supply.

We think it wou'd be adviseable to Authorize us to draw for what Money may come into the Lottery Office & we shall try to be as little troublesome to Congress for Money as possible.

We are with great respect, Sir Your obed hble Servts,

Robt Morris

P.S. I have just been informed that the two Goodriches are Certainly got onbd the Roebuck which I suppose to be the cause of her going to Virga.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written and signed by Robert Morris. LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Signed "RM, GC."

<sup>1</sup> George III's October 31, 1776, speech to Parliament is in *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:961-62.

<sup>2</sup> On this day the Executive Committee also wrote the following letter to Commissary James Mease: "Please to pay Colonel William Irvine One thousand dollars for the service of Recruiting the Seventh Pennsa. Battn. he to be accountable." Dawes Collection, PPAMP.

<sup>3</sup> For information on the activities of the Goodrich family of Portsmouth, Va., see George M. Curtis, III, "The Goodrich Family and the Revolution in Virginia, 1774-1776," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 84 (January 1976): 49-74.

## John Hancock to the Maryland Assembly

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feby 1st. 1777.

In Consequence of Information that a Number of disaffected People in the Counties of Somerset and Worcester in the State of Maryland had proceeded such Lengths as to take up Arms agt. their Country, I am directed by Congress to transmit to you a Memorial from the Inhabitants of those Counties, together with the Depositions which accompanied the same. The dangerous Nature & Tendency of this Insurrection, require that the most vigorous and effectual Measures be immediately taken to suppress it. I am therefore to request you will comply with the enclosed Resolves of Congress for this End. Should the Exertions of your Militia

be apprehended to be ineffectual, the Congress on your representing the Matter to them, will readily order any additional Assistance that shall be thought necessary.<sup>1</sup>

I have wrote to Genl. Smallwood to call on such Continental Officers and Troops as he shall judge proper and necessary on your application to him for this Purpose.

It will be a very fortunate Point, and contribute greatly to the Tranquility of that Country, should you be able to apprehend the Leaders of this Faction, and secure them agt. any similar attempts for the future.

The Flames of Rebellion may be easily extinguished by spirited & timely Exertions at first—but if suffered to spread, the Work will become more difficult and hazardous. It is therefore highly necessary that your Movements should be as quick & as secret as possible; and from your Zeal in Behalf the American Cause and the Repose of your Country now disturbed by the Insurrection of her Enemies, I have no Doubt of your exerting yourselves in a becoming Manner on this Occasion. I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

J. H. Presidt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup>See *JCC*, 7:79, 82–83; and Ronald Hoffman, *A Spirit of Dissension: Economics, Politics, and the Revolution in Maryland* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 194–97.

## John Hancock to William Smallwood

Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 1st. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress I transmit to you,<sup>1</sup> and am to inform you that it is the Order of Congress you should call to the Assistance of the State of Maryland such Continental Officers and Troops as you shall judge necessary on their Application to you.<sup>2</sup> The dangerous Tendency of the Insurrection of the Tories in the Counties of Somerset and Worcester, requires the most vigorous & immediate Measures to suppress it. You will therefore hold yourself in Readiness, to execute such Orders as you shall receive from the Assembly of this State for this important Purpose.

I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed. Servt.

J. H. Presidt

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup>William Smallwood (1732–92), a native Marylander, had been appointed a Continental brigadier general by Congress in October 1776. *DAB*.

<sup>2</sup>See *JCC*, 7:82–83.

## William Hooper to Robert Morris

My dear Sir

Baltimore February 1. 1777

It was with singular pleasure I read your two last very friendly letters,<sup>1</sup> and long before this I had gratefully acknowledged the receipt of them, if I had not met an insuperable obstacle in a fever which at this moment locks me up in my Chamber. After an Illness of several days an Impatience to be in Congress drew me out in a very wet day. The Consequences were what any man in his senses might have expected, a Relapse, & had I not been fortunate in a Physician I perhaps had been measuring my length and breadth *under* ground a situation bad enough indeed, but bad as it is surely preferable to being *above* it for any time in this worst of all possible places. I am now recovering, & God willing propose moving southward in a few days.<sup>2</sup> Nelson by advice of a Physician goes to morrow, He is in a bad state of Health. Harrison is still ill & unless he is more attentive to Exercise & Regimen I fear the consequences will be serious. With one united voice we ascribe this Catalogue of Ills to this place. I declare to you the Congress presents such a scene of yellow death like faces, that you wou[ld] imagine Rhadamanthus<sup>3</sup> had shifted his quarters & was holding Court in Baltimore. I believe were it the case he would soon be glad to get back to his friend Pluto's regions. I have eased my Stomach. When Fancy is exhausted in blackness of description, when you are disposed to abuse my Carolina spare every figure of Rhetorick & compare it to Baltimore.

I congratulate you upon the new face which our affairs have assumed in the Jerseys under every difficulty that a military genius could possibly have to struggle with. General Washington sometimes almost without an army, at best with one composed of raw undisciplined troops, impatient of Command & vastly inferiour in numbers to the Enemy, has been able to check a victorious army, with every thing that could afford a probability of Success, thundering at the very gates of the Capital of America, to change their Course, & is now pursuing them in turn to the only spot which they have possession of in America. Will Posterity believe the Tale? When it shall be consistent with policy to give the history of that man from his first introduction into our service, how often America has been rescued from ruin by the meer strength of his genius, conduct & courage encountering every obstacle that want of money, men, arms, Ammunition could throw in his way, an impartial World will say with you that he is the Greatest Man on Earth. Misfortunes are the Element in which he shines, They are the Groundwork on which his picture appears to the greatest advantage. He rises superiour to them all, they serve as foils to his fortitude, and as stimulants to bring into view those great qualities which in the serenity of life his great modesty keeps concealed. I could fill the side in his praise, but anything I can say cannot equal his Merits or raise your Idea of them.

I lament, my dear Sir, the very small representation which America presents in Congress. The members will soon be reduced to the number of 22, how unequal to the importance of its councils! I am sorry to say that I think they already savour of the truth of an Observation contrasted to that in holy Writ "That in the multitude of Counsellors there is Wisdom." Some of the middle and Southern colonies have much to answer for in their want of representation. It is a Crime however which carries its own punishment with it, & if there are two Interests in America, that must necessarily prevail which always has its advocates on the spot to promote it, while the other is deserted by those whom every tie of honour, Duty & publick virtue should induce to a different conduct. New York, Delaware, Maryland may almost as well desert the Cause as so lamely support it by their appearance in its publick Councils.<sup>4</sup> I have the next delegation of your State much at heart & should be very sorry that any change should take place to the exclusion of Wilson. He is a Character some what particular, but after a long and pretty intimate acquaintance with him I am extremely deceived, if pure Integrity & love to America, a just and generous Attachment to the State which he represents, a strong natural Capacity improved by extensive reading & retentive memory where cool Judgment has matured & digested what he has read are not the genuine Characteristicks of my friend Wilson. His removal from Congress in my opinion would work an essential political Evil. Ross has I think acted unexceptionably. Now and then He takes a whimsical turn, perhaps a wrong one, but to do him Justice he does not persist in it. He is too much of a *Character* not to be excentric. He is a sincere friend to the Cause & I think is independent in his Notions. Pardon this intrusion into *internal local policy*; I have the publick good in view which must prove my Apology.

I am much pleased with our Success against the foraging party, & the more so from General Dickinson having had the Command. He has laid up a kind of Reputation as a patriot & an officer which will be sufficient not only for himself for life but upon which his Brother the Farmer may make draughts to repair that loss of Credit into which a constitutional weakness of nerves has betrayed him & in which I sincerely believe his heart had no share.

What is the Policy of quartering Soldiers upon the Inhabitants of your City. Was not this one of the great evils which the bill of Rights was intended to remedy in the executive power of the British Constitution. Was it not a grievance that we clamoured loudly against when Subject to G.B. I wish it may not lead to reflections injurious to our Cause & give disaffected men reason to complain who have hitherto growled without it, & have in vain wrecked their Inventions to sully our glorious Cause and call forth the Censure of the World upon those who support it. I would not wish wantonly to sport with man's feelings. There will be a time & I hope it is not at a great distance when the distinction of Whig & Tory



will be lost & resolve itself into the common Appellation of *Citizens of the Indept States*, all political grudges will die away & harmony & happiness cement the whole. I wish that no wounds may be made among ourselves that time & common Interest may not at last heal. In so great a Convulsion Sacrifices must be made but it has been the policy of every wise Legislator to found the Change of Government in lenity & forbearance. I have been led to this out of the way Speculation, from having heard that your Council of Safety had barracked Soldiers upon your Citizens & Trusted the execution of it to Melchor. I know your feelings will help me to an excuse for thus trespassing again upon Internal policy. I wish some expedient could be fallen upon to put our monied matters in a proper train. The demands upon us at present are immense & must continue so, like beginners in every thing else we want CEconomy or rather want System. Unless officers are appointed competent to the management of our funds, we must be ruined. From a false parsimony in saving hundreds in salaries of proper Officers we are sporting away Millions in the want of them. I wish the Loan Office may suceed at 4 per Cent. The Southern Colonies will not consent to raise it. They consider the Eastern Governments as in possession of almost all the Continental Currency, & the rise to 5 as only a prelude to a higher demand & that in proportion to our necessities.<sup>5</sup> But I have already trespassed too far upon your patience & proved to you perhaps that my Head has had its share of my fever. I will trouble you no farther than to say I shall be happy to hear from you while I am in Carolina, & to assure you on paper which I hoped to have done in person before I left this part of the Continent that Absent or Present I am & shall ever remain Your's with the truest Affection,

Wm Hooper

RC (James S. Copley Library, La Jolla, Calif.)

<sup>1</sup> Only Morris' January 24, 1777, letter to Hooper has been found.

<sup>2</sup> Congress noted on February 4 that Hooper had leave to return to North Carolina. He was back in Halifax by February 14. See *JCC*, 7:87; and Hooper to Joseph Hewes, February 15, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> A judge of the dead in classical mythology.

<sup>4</sup> See John Hancock to the Delaware Assembly and the New York Convention, January 28, and to the Maryland Council of Safety, February 11, 1777.

<sup>5</sup> Congress raised the interest on loan office certificates to 6% on February 26. *JCC*, 7:158.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feby. 2. 1777

Last Evening We arrived safe in this Town after the longest Journey, and through the worst Roads and the worst Weather, that I have ever experienced. My Horses performed extremely well.

Baltimore is a very pretty Town, situated on Petapsco River, which empties itself into the great Bay of Cheasapeak. The Inhabitants are all

good Whiggs, having sometime ago banished all the Tories from among them. The Streets are very dirty and miry, but every Thing else is agreable except the monstrous Prices of Things. We cannot get an Horse kept under a Guinea a Week. Our Friends are well.

The continental Army is filling up fast, here and in Virginia. I pray that the Massachusetts may not fail of its Quota, in Season.

In this Journey, We have crossed four mighty Rivers, Connecticut, Hudson, Delaware, and Susquehannah. The two first We crossed upon the Ice, the two last in Boats—the last We crossed, a little above the Place where it empties into Cheasapeak Bay.

I think I have never been better pleased with any of our American States than with Maryland. We saw most excellent Farms all along the Road, and what was very striking to me, I saw more sheep and more flax in Maryland than I ever saw in riding a like Distance in any other State. We scarce passed a Farm without seeing a fine flock of sheep, and scarce an House without seeing Men or Women, dressing Flax. Several Times We saw Women, breaking and swingling this necessary Article.

I have been to Meeting, and heard my old Acquaintance Mr. Allison, a worthy Clergyman of this Town whom I have often seen in Philadelphia.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:151–52.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris

Honble. Gentlemen

Baltimore 2 Feby. 1777

You will receive inclosed copies of our letters of the 21st and 30th Decemr., and of the Resolves of Congress accompanying them. It concerns us not less than we are sure it will you, that you should have heard so seldom from us, but the vigilance of the British Cruisers has prevented our most earnest solicitude for this purpose. The manner in which they now conduct their business proves the necessity of the request made by Congress for the loan or sale of a few Capital Ships. The entrance into Delaware & Chesapeak being narrow, by placing one 40 or 50 Gun Ship for the Protection of their Frigates, they stop both our Commerce & our Correspondence. Formerly their Frigates protected their Tenders, but now that we have Frigates, their larger Ships protect their Frigates; and this winter has been so uncommonly favourable that they have been able to keep the sea undisturbed by those severe gales of wind so usual off this Coast in the winter season. If we had a few line of Battle of Ships to aid our Frigates, the Commerce of North America so beneficial to ourselves & so advantageous to France, would be carried on maugre the opposition of Great Britain. As we have not received any of those military Stores &

Cloathing promised by Mr. Deane, we have much reason to fear they have fallen into the Enemy's Hands and will render a fresh supply quite necessary. Except Mr. Deane's favor of Septemr. 17th which is but just now received, and that of October the 1st, we have not heard from him since the summer, so that we have been as destitut<sup>e</sup> of European, as we fear you have been of true American Intelligence.<sup>1</sup> The inclosed papers will furnish you with authentick accounts of our successes against the enemy since the 24th of Decemr. They have paid severely for their visit of parade through the Jerseys, and these events are an abundant proof of British Folly in attempting to subdue North America by force of arms. Although the short inlistments had dispersed our Army directly in the face of an hostile force, and thereby induced a proud enemy to suppose their work was done, yet they suddenly found themselves attacked on all sides by a hardy active Militia, who have been constantly beating up their quarters, captivating and destroying their Troops, so that in the six or seven last weeks they have not lost much fewer than 3000 Men, about 2000 of whom, with many Officers, are now our Prisoners. Instead of remaining cantonned in the pleasant Villages of Jersey, as the inclosed authentick copy of Mr. Howe's order to Coll. de Donop (the original of which fell into our hands by the Colonel's flight from Burdenton) will shew you, that General vainly expected would be the case, they are now collected upon the Brunswick Heights, where they suffer every kind of distress from want of Forage, Fuel, and other necessities, whilst Genl. Washington's Army of Militia so environs them, that they never shew their faces without their lines, but they get beaten back with loss and disgrace. Being thus situated, we have reason to hope, that this part of their Army (and which is the most considerable part) will by the end of winter be reduced very low by deaths, desertion, & captivity. Genl. Heath, with a body of Eastern Troops, is making an impression on New York by King's Bridge, which we understand has obliged the Enemy to recal their Troops from Rhode Island, for the defence of that City.

The regular Corps, that are to compose the new Army, are making up in the several states as fast as possible; but Arms, Artillery, Tent Cloth, & Cloathing will be greatly wanted. For these our reliance is on the favor & friendship of his most Christian Majesty. If you are so fortunate as to obtain them, the propriety of sending them in a strong Ship of War must be very evident to you Gentn. when you know, our Coasts are so covered with British Cruisers from 20 to 50 Guns, though but few of the latter. We believe, they have not more than two Ships of 40, and two or three of 50 Guns in their whole Fleet on the North American Station; and these are employed, one of them to cover a Frigate or two at the Capes of each Bay, whilst the rest remain at New York.

We beg leave to turn your attention to the inclosed propositions of Congress, and we doubt not you will urge their success with that zeal &

careful assiduity, that objects so necessary to the liberty & safety of your Country demand.

We are exceedingly anxious to hear from you, and remain with particular sentiments of esteem & friendship, Honble Gentlemen, Your most obedt & huml Servts.

Benj Harrison

Wm Hooper

Richard Henry Lee

Robt Morris at Philada.

RC (PPAmP). In a clerical hand and signed by Harrison, Hooper, Lee, and Morris. A second copy of this letter in the same clerical hand, but signed by Harrison, Lee, and John Witherspoon, is at NjR.

<sup>1</sup> For further information on Silas Deane's September 17 and October 1, 1776, letters to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, see Robert Morris' letters to Silas Deane, December 20, 1776, note 1, and to John Jay, February 4, 1777, note 2. Robert Morris had sent a copy of Deane's September 17 letter in his January 28, 1777, letter to the committee.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir,

Feby. 2d 1777

We embraced the opportunity of the return waggon that brought up the money to send down 300 Copies of the German translation of the address of the Convention of New York to be distributed in Maryland and Virginia. No News this Morning.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honor to be Sir, Yr. obedt. Servant.

P.S. Please also to receive 56 muster Rolls.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> This day the Executive Committee also wrote letters to Richard Peters, the Board of War's secretary, acknowledging delivery of "the money mentioned in yours of the 26th Jany," and to Michael Hillegas, the Continental treasurer, stating that it planned "to comply with your wishes about the money paper." PCC, item 133, fols. 78-79.

## Elbridge Gerry to the Massachusetts Board of War

Gentlemen

Baltimore 2d Feby. 1777.

I am favoured with your Letter of Jany the 14th<sup>1</sup> & beg Leave to inform You, that Messrs. Joseph Gardoqui & Sons are directed to invest half the proceeds of three Cargoes of fish which I lately sent them "with the Effects that may be left of the Rockingham & Cargo in 100,000 good musket Flints, 20 Tons Lead, 1000 Soldiers Blankets, 5000 Yds. Ticklin-



burg suitable for Soldiers Tents, & the Residue in good Muskets with Bayonets, to be procured in France if cheaper there than at Bilbao, & shipped to a port northward of Boston.”<sup>2</sup> Had You been apprized of this Order I should have wrote to Messrs. Guardoqui’s to have made the Alteration proposed in your Letter, which may now be done by Mr Gerry Member of the House (in my Behalf) if You still think the Articles which You have mentioned are most wanted.<sup>3</sup>

The Express who will deliver You this is charged with Dispatches of great Importance, to be sent with all possible Expedition to Europe by the Council of your State;<sup>4</sup> I wish no Time may be lost in sending the packets to Sea, & shall be glad to be informed on his Return, whether it is the Intention of the General Assembly to be half concerned in the Cargoes above mentioned agreeable to the proposals made in my Letter to General Warren from Philadelphia the 26th Novemr. last.

I think it best to order the other half in a separte Bottom, thereby to divide the Risque, & remain Gentlemen, very respectfully your most huml Sert,  
Elbridge Gerry

P.S. If half the Cargoes are taken by the Assembly, It may be most convenient to have the Articles ordered as aforesd or others in Leiu thereof, shipped on their separte Account, as they all will be sent in one Bottom.

RC (M-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> The Massachusetts Board of War’s January 14, 1777, letter to Gerry is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:949–50.

<sup>2</sup> The closing of Gerry’s quote editorially conjectured.

<sup>3</sup> For further information on the complex nature of Gerry’s business with the Spanish merchants Gardoqui & Sons, see Gerry to Thomas Gerry, February 21, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> This day Richard Henry Lee wrote the following note to Gerry, Samuel Adams, and William Whipple: “We have been not less disturbed than you by the detention of our intelligence Vessel, and I am now, in consequence of the Committees determination, preparing a letter to the Commissioners. We propose sending 2 Copies to the Council of Massachusetts & another to Philadelphia. The Express that lately made such haste to & from Boston is the person we intend to employ on this occasion. I wish Capt. Johnson would stay a day or two, because Fulford may agree with this State, in which case Capt. Johnson wd. be much wanted to take command of the Lexington, which Vessel may be immediately employed to reconnoitre the enemy and suppress their Tenders.” Samuel Adams Papers, NN. Capt. Henry Johnson was appointed to command the *Lexington* on February 5. *JCC*, 7:90.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

No. 1

Baltimore 2d Feby 1777

I now aknowledge the receipt of your Several favors. One of the 28 Decr. was handed me the 19th Jany. by Mr. Betten, one of the 12th Novr. & another of 23 Decr came to hand the 26th Ult. & one of 8th Jany by

Mr Lovell I receiv'd last evening. I have been thus Perticular that you may know if any Miscary, for which purpose I shall in future persue your method in numbering my letters, & 'tho have wrote you two or three before shall call this No. 1. You seem to lament the loss of Forts Washington, & Lee, I only lament that our Genl. shod attempt to hold those posts. When I came through the army, the intention was to evacuate them, but some strange infatuation it seems afterwards alter'd the wise determination, however I am inclin'd to think we shall loose nothing by it in the end. As to the retreat thro' New Jersey, I am convinced it was ordered by Providence for ourr advantage, for no measures that could have been taken by us, wod so effectually secure to our interest the inhabitants of that Country; as the Ravages committed by the Enemy, some accots. of which will soon be published. I have seen a letter in the hand writing of the Tyrants dispencer of Pardons, to one of his Hessian Butchers directing him to seize all Provisions whereever he could find it leaving only what in his opinion shod be sufficient for an ordinary Family, which his agent faithfully observed, for after plundering every thing that he could carry off & destroying what he cod. not carry off, he gave them Protections for themselves, Properties, that being in his opinion sufficient for an ordinary family. No doubt he knew his masters will. It was given out in General orders that if a man was found with a gun in his hand not having an officer with him, he shod be immediately hung up, so if a poor fellow was to go in search of a Squiril or Partridge for his dinner after being plunder'd of all his Provision & shod be so unfortunate as to fall in with any of these plunderers he is to be hung up on the first tree. This is British Humanity; this is the treatment that all America wod have experienced had they submitted to the Yoak of the Tyrant; nay much worse must have been expected if we are to judge from their conduct to those People that have been in their Power, for Rapes, murders, & every other Species of Cruelty that these worse than Barbarians have exercised on the poor inhabitants, Beggars all discription.

I am very glad to hear that there is an imbargo on Privateers, as I think it may be productive of good consequencies, but cannot think with you that there shod be a total stop put to this Business.<sup>1</sup> The authority of the several states may do it, as they find the exegency of affairs require it, but it will by no means do for Congress to undertake that Business. We must be very careful not to put more Power in the hands of Congress than is absolu[te]ly necessary, for the good of the whole we shod always bare in mind, the natural fondness that all mankind have for Power, & therefore shod deal it out as sparingly as possible. It gives me great Pleasure to find your public Business goes on so smoothly. I hope you'll have some Salutory Laws for the Punishment of Traitors. It is high time that was done for our internal Enemies do us much more mischief than all the force that Great Britain can bring against us. A strong oath of allegiance to the state shod be administer'd to every person in the least

suspected, abjuring the authority of the King & Parliament of Britain or any other power not deriv'd from the People. When these measures are taken & the Laws faithfully executed we shall soon have things in a good way. Affairs abroad wear a very favorable aspect, we are in daily Expectation of very interesting Intelligence from our Commissioners at the French Court & I hope it wont be a great while, before we hear from those at some other Courts, but these are matters that you must be very carefull who you trust with for the Present. Measures are taking by Congress & I hope will be taken by every state to give stability to the Currency. Congress seem more firmly united than ever, & I am sensible the Removal from Philadelphia has a very good effect, 'tho I by no means approv'd of it at the time. I think on the whole our affairs look well, the Principle object is to raise the new Army, that being compleated & proper measure taken for the Security of our Trade, we shall be in a scituation, under the Smiles of Heaven, to Establish Liberty, & Happiness.

J. L. writes that he shall put some Business into your hands, which I suppose he has done before this time.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Brackett has favor'd me with a letter (which I receiv'd only a few days ago tho it is dated 2d Decr) which I shall answer soon but believe shall not be able by this opportunity. Give my very affecte Regards to all Friends & perticularly commend me to our Mother who I hope enjoys as much health & Happiness as her advanc'd age will admit off. I am  
You very Affecte Bror.<sup>3</sup>

Wm Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> On December 10, 1776, the New Hampshire Assembly had resolved "that a General Embargo imediately take place and continue, till the further order of this Court, on all vessels of every Denomination (excepting such as may be fitted out by order of the United States, or either of them, or by the Board of War in behalf of this State or such as may so continue from one harbor in this State to another, or such as may be permitted by the Genl Assembly, or in the recess thereof by the Council or Committee of Safety of this State)." *N.H. State Papers*, 8:412-13.

<sup>2</sup> John Langdon appointed Joseph as his deputy prize agent for New Hampshire. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1021.

<sup>3</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Whipple to Joseph Whipple, February 8, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feby. 3. 1777

This Day has been observed in this Place, with exemplary Decency and Solemnity, in Consequence of an Appointment of the Government, in Observance of a Recommendation of Congress, as a Day of Fasting. I went to the Presbyterian Meeting and heard Mr. Allison deliver a most pathetic and animating, as well as pious, patriotic and elegant Discourse. I have seldom been better pleased or more affected with a sermon.

The Presbyterian Meeting House in Baltimore stands upon an Hill just at the Back of the Town, from whence We have a very fair Prospect of the Town, and of the Water upon which it stands, and of the Country round it. Behind this Eminence, which is the Bacon [Beacon] Hill of Baltimore, lies a beautifull Meadow, which is entirely incircled by a Stream of Water. This most beautifull Scène must be partly natural and partly artificial. Beyond the Meadow and Canall, you have a charming View of the Country. Besides the Meeting House there is upon this Height, a large and elegant Court House, as yet unfinished within, and a small Church of England in which an old Clergyman officiates, Mr. Chase, Father of Mr. Chace one of the Delegates of Maryland, who they say is not so zealous a Whigg as the Son.

I shall take Opportunities to describe this Town and State more particularly to you hereafter. I shall inquire into their Religion, their Laws, their Customs, their Manners, their Descent and Education, their Learning, their Schools and Colledges and their Morals. It was said of Ulysses I think that he saw the Manners of many Men and many Cities, which is like to be my Case, as far as American Men and Cities extend, provided Congress should continue in the rolling Humour, which I hope they will not. I wish however, that my Mind was more at rest than it is, that I might be able to make more exact Observations of Men and Things as far as I go.

When I reflect upon the Prospect before me of so long an Absence from all that I hold dear in this World, I mean all that contributes to my private personal Happiness, it makes me melancholly. When I think on your *Circumstances* I am more so, and yet I rejoice at them in spite of all this Melancholly. God almightys Providence protect and bless you and yours and mine.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:152–53.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feby. 3. 1777

After a very tedious Journey, through the severist Weather, and over very bad Mountains, in one Part of it, and perfect Mortar, in the other Part, I am arrived in good Health, and Spirits at Baltimore.

Congress is Sitting, and by the best Information I can obtain from our Friends, are very well united and much more Spirited than ever.

The Recruiting Service goes on, as every Body tells me, from Boston to Baltimore, very well, and it is here said, in Virginia. I cannot sufficiently express the Sense I have of the indispensible Importance that our State Should be the earliest and most exemplary in compleating our Quota. It may be depended upon, that our State is the Barometer at which every



other Looks. If the Mercury rises, there, it will rise in every other Part of the Continent, if it falls there, it will fall every where.

By all that I can gather, the British Ministry have Solicited for Cosacks. The Swiss is doubtfull, But it is the opinion of a Man in England whose Intelligence has heretofore proved extreamly exact, that the Ministry will be able to obtain near Twenty thousand Recruits in England, Scotland and Ireland and Germany. If this Conjecture is right there is great Reason to Suppose that they will not Venture upon so dangerous a Step as that of procuring Siberians. Their late great Successes will in their opinion render them unnecessary. But in all Events, it is our Wisdom, our Prudence, our Policy, our Cunning, our Duty, our every Thing to destroy, those who are now in America. They are compleatly in our Power and if We do not embrace the opportunity, We shall not only in dust and ashes repent of our sloth, but it will be but Justice that We should Suffer the wretched Consequences of it. I am Sure, our brave New Englandmen can break the Force of Newport—and even the main Body at Brunswick May be imprisoned. But an Army is wanting. Dont let it be wanting long.

Congress will do and have done what they can—but if the States will not execute the Plans and Resolutions of Congress what is to be expected?

New England, I find is now in higher Estimation than it has been. Our Troops have behaved nobly, and turned the Fortune of the War. Pray let us keep up our Credit, as I am sure We can. Adieu my dear Friend.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feb. 3. 1777

It may not be a Mispense of Time to make a few Observations upon the Situation of some of the States at this Time.

That Part of New York which is yet in our Possession is pretty well united, and pretty firm. The Jerseys have recovered from their Surprise, and are lending as much assistance as can well be expected from them. Their assembly is now Sitting, and are Said to be well disposed to do what they can. The Assembly of Pensilvania, is also Sitting. They have abolished the oath which gave so much Discontent to the People, and are gradually acquiring the Confidence of the People, and opposition has Subsided. The Delaware Government have formed their Constitution, and the Assembly is now Sitting. Maryland has formed its Constitution and their Assembly now Sitting in Consequence of it, are filling it up. There is a Difficulty in two of the Counties, but this will last but a little while. In Virginia Governor Henry has recovered his Health, has returned to Williamsburg, and is proceeding in his government with great Industry. N.

Carolina have compleated their Government, and Mr Caswell is Governor. In Virginia and North Carolina, they have made an Effort for the Destruction of Bigotry which is very remarkable. They have abolished their Establishments of Episcopacy so far as to give compleat Liberty of Conscience to Dissenters, an Acquisition in favour of the Rights of Mankind, which is worth all of the Blood and Treasure which has been and will be Spent in this war. S. Carolina and Georgia compleated their Governments, a long time ago. Thus I think there are but three States remaining which have not erected their Governments, Massachusetts, N. York and New Hampshire.

These are good Steps towards Government in the State which must be introduced and established before we can expect Discipline in our Armies, the Unum necessarium to our Salvation.

I will be instant and incessant, in season and out of season, in inculcating these important Truths, that nothing can Save Us but Government in the State and Discipline in the Army. There are so many Persons among my worthy Constituents who love Liberty better than they understand it that I expect to become unpopular by my Preaching. But Woe is me if I preach it not. Woe will be to them, if they do not hear.

I am terrified with the Prospect of Expence, to our State, which I find no Possibility of avoiding. I cannot get an Horse kept in this Town under a Guinea a Week. One hundred and four guineas a year for the Keeping of two Horses, is intolerable, but cannot be avoided. Simple Board is fifty shilling a Week here, and Seven Dollars generally. I cannot get boarded under forty shillings, i.e. five dollars and a third a Week for myself and fifteen for my servant—besides finding for myself all my wood, Candles, Liquers and Washing.

I would send home my servant and Horses, but Congress is now a moveable Body, and it is impossible to travell and carry great Loads of Baggage without a servant and Horses, besides the Meanness of it, in the Eyes of the World.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Massachusetts Council

Honble Gentlemen,

Baltimore 3 Feby. 1777

The number and vigilance of our enemies hath prevented us hitherto from sending the enclosed Despatches through these southern ports And since it is of the last importance to the American Cause that these letters should reach their destination with all possible dispatch, We beg the favor

of you, Gentlemen, to cause the quickest Sailing vessel that to be directly engaged on continental account to carry the Packet No. 1 directly to France. We wish the Captain to be a man of secrecy and discretion, that without disclosing to any one his destination or his business, he may immediately on his arrival repair by post to Paris, deliver the letters with his own hand to the Gentlemen they are intended for, or to any one of them, receive their answer, and be governed by their directions touching his return and the port he is to come to.<sup>1</sup>

We meet with so much difficulty in the business of Remittance, that we are desirous this vessel should take with her such Merchandize as she can conveniently without injuring her sailing, but by no means occasion any delay. For this purpose the Secret Committee send a letter to their Agent which You will please to convey to him,<sup>2</sup> that he may while the vessel is fitting, prepare a small cargo for her.

The Merchants in Nantes on whom we send a letter of credit for the Captain, will inform him where to find either, or all of the Gentlemen, to whom the letters are addressed in Paris. Your drafts on the Congress committee of Secret Correspondence for the expense incurred in this business shall be duly honored.

The Packets No. 2 are duplicates, and we wish may be sent by any vessel going to France, but under the care of a discreet person employed by you at Continental expense to go passenger; and to repair immediately with his dispatchs to Paris, and deliver them himself to the gentlemen they are intended for. He will as in the other case take his directions from the gentlemen as to the time of his return.

You will please, Gentn, to direct the person to whose care these Packets are committed to have them sealed up in a Bag with weights ready to be sunk in the sea, if there should be a certainty of their being taken by the enemy, as it may be attended with the worst consequences should the enemy get possession of them.

Yrs &ca.

B. Harrison

R.H. Lee

W Hooper

FC (DNA: PCC, item 79).

<sup>1</sup> The Massachusetts Council replied indirectly to this letter through Robert Morris as chairman of the Secret Committee. Responding to a now missing February 7 letter from Morris, Jeremiah Powell notified him that the council had met with John Bradford and that he would fit out a ship. Powell concluded that "as soon as she is ready we shall Transmit the dispatches we have received from the Committee of Secret Correspondance in the method they have directed." PCC, item 65, 1:187-88. See also Robert Morris to John Bradford, January 23 and February 7, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to Robert Morris

Sir,

Baltimore Feby 3d 1777

The packets, with the papers inclosed, are left open for your perusal and signature, which done, be pleased to send them forward by the Express that brings them.

You will please subjoin to our intelligence anything that may not have come to our knowledge, and which you may think of importance enough to be communicated to the Commissioners.

We are, with esteem, Sir your most [. . .] Servants,

Benj Harrison

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. The Packets No. 2 contain copies of the papers in Packets No. 1, which latter have been sealed some time and therefore need not be opened. Among the news papers for France & for Mr. Bingham, is wanting Gen. Washingtons account to Congress of the first affair at Trenton with a list of the prisoners made there on the 25 of Decr. Be pleased to get a paper for each of Phila and inclose.

RC (NhHi). In the hand of Lee, and signed by Lee and Harrison.

## Richard Henry Lee to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore February 3d. 1777

The impossibility of getting intelligence at present thro' this Bay, has obliged us to send an Express to the Council of Massachusetts, requesting they will immediately dispatch a quick sailing Vessel with letters to the Commissioners. The only Vessel we had sent from hence for this purpose, is now shut up in a small Creek below by the Men of War four of five of which are now in this Bay, as we are informed, & some of them as high as Smiths Point, mouth of Potowmack, they have taken Buchanans ship as she went down.<sup>1</sup> We have reason to suppose that these are the ships that lately block'd up the Delaware, and that they are brought here by the fugitive Guthridges' and the Tories on the Eastern shore of Maryland. The latter are numerous, and we apprehend have informed of a quantity of Provisions preparing there for the Troops which they mean to assist in getting to the Enemy.

We are doing all we can in this slow place to get armed Vessels down to obstruct this wicked design. In the mean time would it not be highly proper to send out immediately the Sachem or Race Horse, or both to the Capes of Virginia to notify coming in Vessels of their danger, and also



to suppress any Tenders that they may have out to intercept Vessels coming in, whilst they think themselves secure from interruption from hence by the large ships covering the passage of the Bay opposite Potowmack. Captain Isaiah Robinson is as perfectly well acquainted with our Bay that he could in a swift sailing Vessel not only give notice to Vessels bound in, but come in himself, suppress their Tenders, and, regardless of the bigger Ships run into a thousand places of protection and security where they cannot molest him, taking care of the Counties of Somerset, Worster and an adjoining Maryland Eastern shore. If you approve this Plan can it not be immediately executed? <sup>2</sup> I am inclined to think your Bay is open now, and that it is a good opportunity to push Biddle and the other Vessels out on the business you mention. We shall keep the letters you sent us for France until we can get an opportunity here, when we propose sending out the Lexington.

Bradford's Journal of the 29th of January contains a very accurate account of the late Military Manœuvres in the Jerseys, it will be well to send three or four copies to the Commissioners and by all means let some go by this Express in the Packets for France.

I am dear Sir with particular Esteem, Your Affectionate & Obedient Servt.

Richard Henry Lee

Tr (ScHi).

<sup>1</sup> Archibald Buchanan's ship *Farmer*, bound for France with a cargo of tobacco, had been captured by H.M.S. *Brune* on January 20. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:873, 1004. On April 16 the Secret Committee ordered Treasurer Michael Hillegas to pay Buchanan "14,666 $\frac{2}{3}$  dls, being the valuation of the ship *Farmer* Capt. Dashiell chartered & insured by this Com. on public Acct." Journal of the Secret Committee, fol. 127, MH-H.

<sup>2</sup> In his February 11 reply Morris indicated that there were no cruisers immediately available to execute this plan. However, due to reports from the West Indies that all homeward bound vessels were heading for the Chesapeake Bay, Morris subsequently ordered the Continental sloop *Fly*, Capt. Elisha Warner, to cruise off the capes of Virginia. See Morris to Lee, February 11; and Marine Committee to Elisha Warner, February 17, 1777.

## Francis Lewis to Horatio Gates

Dear Sir

Baltimore 3d Feby. 1777.

Finding you are likely to remain at Phila. for some time, permit me to request the favor of your forwarding the inclosed letter by some safe Conveyance, but if none such should offer, that you would distroy it. If you could at any time fall upon some safe method for conveying Mrs. Lewis & her daughter to Phila. I am happy in knowing that General Gates will embrace it. I have received a letter from my Wife dated at Newark the 12th Decemr. informing me their situation was not so agreeable as could be wished.

We have this moment advice by Express that three ships of War, are in this Bay vizt one of 60 Guns, one of 50 & a Frigate, that they are landing Arms &c at Gloucester Point, in order to Arm the Tories. This the Consequence of suffering the Gutteridges to escape, who we suppose has planed this Manoeuver. Troops are collecting to oppose them. My regards to your Lady & Bob. I am, Dr Sir, Your very Humble Servt.

F. Lewis

P.S. A Virginia Battalion arived in town this moment, likely Men, no Arms.

RC (NH).

### Francis Lewis to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr.

Sir,

Baltimore 3d Feby. 1777

I have been favored with your letter of the 7th Decemr. relative to the order on John Klyne which I communicated to my friend Mr. Manuel Josephson the drewr, in answer thereto I send you inclosed his letter. If you can render him any Services therein you'l oblige, Sir, Your very Humbl Servt.

F. Lewis

P.S. We have just received advice that a 60 & 50 Gun Ship with a Frigate are in the Bay as high up as Gloucester.

RC (CtHi).

### William Whipple to Meshech Weare

Sir,

Baltimore 3d Feby. 1777

I have just time to advise you by Express to Boston that Mr. Betton arrived here the 19th Ult. with your dispatches & the day following a grant was made to N. Hampshire of 100,000 Dolls.<sup>1</sup> but the backwardness of the Treasury caused by the removal of Congress to this place is the reason of his delay to this time & I fear will detain some days longer, there being a large sum for the Eastern States, which it is thought best to send together, under a sufficient Guard. Mr. Betton is very impatient to return, but I hope he will be prevailed on to wait for the money as I am confident it will be conveyed to you much sooner by him than if it should be sent after him. It gives me great pain that he should be thus delayed but there is no possibility of avoiding it.<sup>2</sup>

I am Sir, with great esteem & respect your most obt. Servt.

Wm. Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Meshech Weare's December 27, 1776, letter to John Hancock requesting funds for supplies and bounties was read in Congress on January 20, 1777. The report of the Board of Treasury recommending this action is in Elbridge Gerry's hand on the verso of Weare's December 27 letter. See *JCC*, 7:49-50; *PCC*, item 64, fols. 21-24; and *N.H. State Papers*, 8:439-40. Weare had also written a December 27 letter to the New Hampshire delegates stressing the need for money from Congress. *N.H. State Papers*, 8:440.

<sup>2</sup> For the departure of James Betton with the money for New Hampshire, see John Hancock to James Betton et al., February 11, 1777.

## Samuel Adams to Samuel Cooper

My dear Sir

Baltimore Feb 4th 1777

I send you the inclosed Speech for your Amusement.<sup>1</sup> One or two Remarks you will observe are made upon it. There is Room for many more. I wish some ingenious Pen might be employd. The Contest with America, it seems, is now confessd by the British Monarch to be "arduous." I think he greatly deceives himself, if he does not expect it will be more so. Indeed he sees it; for we must, says he, "*at all Events* prepare for another Campaign." "If their Treason is sufferd to take Root, much Mischief will grow out of it—to the present System of *all* Europe." Here we have the Authority of a King's (not a very wise one I confess) to affirm, that the War between Britain and the united States of America will affect the Balance of Power in Europe. Will not the different Powers take different Sides to adjust the Ballance to their different Interests? "I am using my *utmost* Endeavors to conciliate the unhappy Differences between two Neighboring Powers." If he is still *using* his Endeavors, it seems, the Differences are not yet made up. "I continue to receive *Assurances* of Amity from the several Courts in Europe"—But he adds "It is expedient we should be in a respectable State of *Defence* at home." If he has such Assurances of the Continuance of Amity in Europe, why is it so expedient at this time to be in a respectable State of Defence at home? Surely he cannot think the *American* Navy yet so formidable, as to demand this Caution. Or is he at length become wise enough to attend to a good old Maxim, *In Peace prepare for War*. By his prefixing a "Notwithstanding" to his "fair Prospect," and his being manifestly hard pressd with "the present Scituation of Affairs" in America, I am led to conclude, that he looks upon his "Assurances of *Amity*" as the mere Compliments of a Court; and that he strongly apprehends, the Quarrel he has plungd himself into with America hath excited a Curiosity and a Watchfulness in some of the Powers of Europe, which will produce a contrary Effect. I am with very great Esteem, your assured Friend and humble Servant,

FC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> For George III's October 31, 1776, speech to Parliament, see *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:961-62.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Baltimore Feby 4th 1777

I wrote you on my way hither from Hanover Court House in Virginia, suggesting to you my apprehensions relative to one Ferns, who appeared to me suspicious.<sup>1</sup> I shall now, as near as I can recollect, recapitulate the matters which dropt from him, (when he had so far indulged in drinking as to be off his guard) lest the letter I wrote should have miscarried.

He was pilot to the fleet under Lord How, & brought them into Hudson's river, was consulted by the Admiral concerning certain Expeditions which he had in contemplation, which Ferns declared to be unadvisable because of the late season. A communication was carried on between the Tories in every State and New York & a traffic of gold & silver for continental money. Mr. Cornell added the adventurers in this traffic. Two from North Carolina had lately dealt to a considerable amount, & I fancy reside in or near Newbern.

I intend hereafter to trouble you with a letter every post, & shall give my sentiments of the different political principles which I shall perceive to actuate the several States, the measures intended to be pursued, the intelligence we receive & the important decisions in Congress. I find a considerable jealousy is entertained of the Northern States, I know not how justly; at present I must refer you to Mr. Hooper who is much better qualified to give you satisfaction on all these matters than I am. Our situation here is unsettled, uncomfortable, & incredibly expensive. These circumstances will I doubt not occasion another adjournment of Congress. Mr. Hooper takes with him all the newspapers, & some copies of the King's speech; you will doubtless see them, & I need not suggest any reflections; they will readily occur to you, & you will foresee greater events than have yet distinguished our struggles. The calamities of mankind are not speedily to be intermitted, & war & fury will rage in several quarters of the Globe. I hope however the contest will not be very injurious to America.

I have the honour to be sir, with due respect, & sincere Esteem, Your very obed. serv't,

Thos Burke

Feby 5th. This day it was resolved in Congress that Col. Nash should be appointed a Brigadier General, that he should proceed to the western part of our State, & expedite as much as possible the recruiting service, & that the several Battalions of Continental Troops in North & South Carolina should join General Washington as soon as may be after the fifteenth of March.<sup>2</sup> It was proposed to request your assistance in forwarding the recruiting business, but we observed that you were already sensible of the necessity of such an exertion of your interest & influence, & being so well inclined to serve to your utmost power the cause of America, there was no need to remind you of it. I know, sir, you will omit



nothing in your power to assist this so necessary service, & I hope through your efforts the North Carolina Battalions will come into the field as complete as those of any State.

The Congress have also resolved that five hundred thousand dollars be advanced to our State when your warrant shall be produced, agreeable to the Ordinance, & when such warrant arrives, I shall use every diligence for Expediting the remittance.<sup>3</sup> I am &c, Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Burke's January 27 letter to North Carolina governor Caswell is in *N.C. State Records*, 11:368-69.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:90-91.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:92.

## Abraham Clark to James Caldwell

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore Febr'y. 4th. 1777.

Your favour of the 27th Ulto I recd this day, am greatly oblidged for the intelligence it brings, being the first Certain News I have recd. From my family since Novemr. My pleasure is much increased by the additional circumstance of the People of Eliza. Town being able to Attend public Worship without interruption; as I had heard and believed Our Church & your house were both burned by the Enemy. I must now suppose the Acct. not true or you would not have omitted mentioning it. I wrote you upwards of two weeks ago by Dr Witherspoon<sup>1</sup> who set off for a Sight of Princeton and hath not returned; in that I ventured a large Draft on you for intelligence. I earnestly wish to know the State of our Country and of our Friends, which I have not yet been able to Obtain. Two Armies, one of which the most Savage known among civilized nations, must have Spread desolation through the Country which an age can Scarcely recover. I feel for their distresses, and wish I could think them at an end, but this is beyond my expectations. Great Britain undoubtedly hath contracted for a large Numr. of Rusians which will pay us a Visit next Summer unless Prevented. Our General cause will I think Nevertheless Obtain a Support, he that setteth up states doth not, usually put them down in a Year, and I doubt not but by the Providence of God we shall be enabled to withstand our Foes. A Union or aliance I believe is now forming for our Support. France, Spain & Prusia, and perhaps Sweden will unite in it, the Independance of America hath caught the Attention of Europe, and all Commercial States are wishing for a share of our Commerce. France & Spain are exerting their utmost efforts to prepare for War, our Flag is wore in their harbours, and our Vessels protected, our Prizes where carried in Secured for us, and the duties on American trade chiefly taken of. All intelligence from France & Spain as favourable as we can expect, the great Obstacle with those kingdoms were apprehensions of a Reconcilia-

tion between Britain & us, these were raised by Lord Stormont & Mr Wedderborne and some American Renegadoes. They are now removed. We have the kings Speech which you have or likely soon will see, his majesty seems to Speak somewhat faltering, and tho' he hath friendly assurances from his Neighbours yet he thinks it necessary to provide for defence at home.

Your enquiry after the pay of the Staff must at present be satisfied by being informed the same is under consideration of the board of war & will I expect soon be reported. The pay of Chaplain was raised last July to 33 & 1 or 2 thirds of a dollar. You are Sensible in Settling the pay of Officers we must Attend to it in general & cannot come up to the Merit of some particular persons who are found to fill the office, when multitudes scarcely deserve the reward allowed. I most heartily wish you could have the appointment of paymaster added to that of Chaplain but I fear to mention it as it is contrary to Established Rules, but can it be done with propriety it shall not be neglected.

There are now four or five Men of War in this Bay, as well as some in Delaware. They greatly Annoy our trade. The two lower Counties of Maryland on the Eastern Shore & Sussex on Delaware, give us much trouble; they are mostly disaffected and are encouraged by the Men of War near them. Measures are however taking for Suppressing them, but this will necessarily stop forces who would otherwise soon join Genl Washington, which by his Letters he seems much in want of. Many are Surprized at the Divided State of our Army dispersed through the Jerseys, they seem to be in the same posture as the Enemy were when Attacked at Trenton & Princetown. Genl. Heath we can hear nothing of, it was said he had taken Fort Independance but this is now contradicted. Yesterday was observed as a public Fast through this state, I heard Mr. Patrick Allison Preach, and was much pleased with his performance. I am in hopes he will be prevailed with to publish it. In the Evening a Kitchen or Stable or both belonging to a public house in this town took fire & was consumed the main building preserved but much damaged, this house had been taken up & used through the day in frolicking & dancing which at night ended in a blaze.

This is one of the most horrible places I have seen, the poorest of board a dollar a day for diet & Lodging, Wine 12/ a bottle, rum 30/ per Gall., horse keeping 3/6 per day, these people might be pictured with hooks on every finger sure to catch something if you come near them.

I esteem myself greatly Obligated by your readiness to procure a place for my family; If the Enemy leave Brunswick this Winter I shall not care to improve my own place next Summer, but would chuse to hire it out and hire a place for myself pretty far back as far at least as Black river, or if I could buy a place of about £500 Value good for grazing I should have no Objections to it, but I believe the Extravagent rise of Land will prevent my purchasing.

Febry. 5th. The above I wrote last night. I shall now only add, that this day I moved Congress to give you the appointment of paymaster in Addition to that of Chaplain, this was opposed as Contrary to the former Resolves of Congress, which however in one Instance hath been broken through; Congress, Sensible of the important service you have rendered our Common Cause manifested a great readiness to take proper Notice of your Zeal & industry and Accordingly Apptd. a Committee to consider & reward the same. Doctor Hall, Mr. Page & myself the Comee.<sup>2</sup> I have no more to add, but that I remain, my Dr Friend, Most Affectionately Yours,  
Abra. Clark

RC (NjHi). Addressed: "The Revd. Mr. James Caldwell, at head Quarters, Morris Town. Favd. by Mr. Burke."

<sup>1</sup> Only an extract of Clark's January 19 letter to Caldwell has been found. "All accounts from France and Spain are favourable. But we have been so unfortunate as to receive no Account from them since they got the Declaration of Independence of July the 4th. The Accounts we have frequently had in the News of our Declaration of Independence arriving in Europe seems to have been no more than the Resolutions of the 15 of May for Establishing New forms of Government, tho' the last Declaration was sent to England by Lord Howe after the battle on Long Island with a Pompous Account of their Victory, which seems to have engaged the Attention of England without their spending any Thoughts upon our Declaration. . . . Gen. Washington I am told writes to our President by a Letter just received that Gen. Howe intends to Try Gen. Lee as a Deserter. We some Time ago directed the Gen. to propose an Exchange for him. Should they refuse it, and take his life a bloody scene will immediately be opened, retaliation will be made. . . ." *C. F. Libbie & Co. Catalog*, March 17-21, 1891, item 5732. Ellipses in Tr.

In addition, there is also an extract of a letter Clark wrote in Baltimore on January 6 to a recipient who has not been identified. "We are in Anxious Suspence about the issue of a Battle at Trenton which we expect took place last Week on Friday . . . all my Property is destroyed by the Enemy . . . New Jersey as well as many other parts have undergone a great Change of Circumstances since I last saw you. These Changes I hope have not damped your Spirits and discouraged your further exertions. This is a Time to Try Courage, prove the Stability of Whigs & discover the Wretches who dared Oppose the Sacred Rights of freedom." *The Collector* 61 (April 1948), item M 593. Ellipses in Tr.

<sup>2</sup> On March 15 Congress decided to pay Caldwell \$300 "for extraordinary services." *JCC*, 7:93, 182.

## Executive Committee to the Board of War

Gent,

Philada. Feb. 4. 1777

We have received your Favours of several Dates from the 14th January to the 30 inclusive and in our Correspondence with Congress have attended to the several Subjects of them. Colonel Flower having been lately appointed to a Department which gives him authority to inspect into the State of the continental Arms, We expect to receive officially from him the Return you mention in yours of the 14th January. Col. Flowers is to obtain from the Council of Safety a proper List of the Arms that have been

distributed to the Militia, and will then give Us in a general View the State of the whole which we shall immediately transmit to your Board. You may depend we shall give the closest Attention to whatever Matters shall be recommended to Us by the Board, and are, Gent, Your most obedt hum Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

RC (PHi). Written by Clymer and signed by Clymer and Morris.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 4th. 1777

We received the enclosed dispatches <sup>1</sup> yesterday by private conveyances & now send them forward by Post. We cannot help adding to what the General has said of the want of Money, that the demands here are so numerous that the last 200000 Dollars you sent us are nearly gone. The Commissary of Provisions required 60,000 dollars yesterday, The Director of the Hospitals 10,000. Mr Palfrey has drawn several orders on us for near 50,000. We had to repay 10,000 that we had borrowed beside making advances to numbers of the recruiting Officers for that Service which we think essential & we are also supplying Mr Dallam with money to pay off the Militia that are regularly discharged from Camp after having done their duty there. The Board of Assistants to the Marine Committee are now getting the Tradesmen & others to Work on the Frigates & other vessells of War here & will want Money for that department, hitherto it has been supplied by drawing all the Continental share of Prize money out of the Agents hands & that Fund is exhausted for present. The Quarter Master General will have very heavy demands for his department. The Commissary of Provisions will be calling daily for heavy supplies whilst they are forming Magazines and in short when we reflect that you cannot have much of the last five million unappropriated & that what does remain is to be printed & signed at the very time it is wanted, That your dependance afterwards is to be on a Loan with which the People who are to lend are not Satisfied & on a Lottery the Success of which is by no means certain & that in addition to all these disagreeable circumstances the war must inevitably be carried on at four times the expence that has been spent before on Acct of the great addition to your Army in Horse & Foot & on Acct of the high prices of every thing wanted or rather of the depreciation of the Value of your Money. All these things being duely considered & it is high time they were so, What is to be done? <sup>2</sup>

We hope the Congress will excuse us, but we see an absolute necessity for the utmost & speediest exertions. You must raise the interest of the Loan Office at least to 5 per Cent, many think & probably it may be the



most effectual & best way to fix it at six per Cent which will instantly remove all objections. You will get what money can be borrowed & You will want it even if instead of the seven Milion voted you shou'd be offered twenty. This year will cost nearer 40 million than twenty & where is it to be got if early & effectual means are not taken. The addition of interest will make no heavy addition to the public debt & it is paid to the inhabitants of America, so that in fact the Country is not a bit the poorer and the debt be increased. Not so with what you borrow abroad, there the Interest is an Actual loss to America & here you have voted six per Cent which necessity alone cou'd or will justify, but the necessity of borrowing Money at home is equally great, at least so it appears to us.

The Removal of Congress from this City, had a pernicious influence on the Credit of their Money. You will Consider Philada from its Central situation, the extent of its Commerce, the Number of its artificers, Manufacturers & other Circumstances to be, to the United States, in the Circulation of their money, what the Heart is to the Human body in Circulating the blood. The Continental Currency is perpetually passing & repassing through it for Commercial & other purposes and it carries with it from hence, wherever it goes some proportion of value to what it bears here. This is now verified, for since it sunk here, the depreciation is gradually extending to the extremity. We are of opinion the Congress may now return with safety & that they cannot be disturbed by any new attacks on this side September by which time we shall certainly have an army able to meet & Cope with the Enemy wherever they please. We ground our present opinion of safety to this City on many recurring Circumstances, but principally on the Enemies want of Horses to move the necessary Stores, provisions, Forage, Artillery &c &c for such an undertaking. They have not Numbers sufficient & what they have are unable to do the duty, neither can they Subsist what they have. They will not undertake such an Expedition by Water for they have not men enough to hold New York & attack this place at the same time. If they depend on assistance from Quebec they cannot get those Troops here by Sea sooner than August & as to reinforcements from Europe they must be more difficult to be had & later in coming this year than last & so in each succeeding year whilst they are mad enough to carry on the war. If this reasoning be right, the Congress may return with safety and we imagine it does not require Arguments to prove that the general interests of America requires that they shou'd return if possible. Where you now are, you have not, nor can you possibly have that immediate assistance to the various departments of your business, that can at all times be commanded here. The preparations for next Campaigne are now beginning. [They] are immense. This place we see plainly already must [be] the nursery for them; the objects are so important that you shou'd be on the spot and have them under your inspection. For our parts we feel the weight of the applications made to us on

this head & foresee that if the Congress do not remove a Committee at this place will have the heaviest burthen of any in America. We are convinced that your return here will give confidence to your army & Credit to your Money and as it is our opinion we think it our duty to offer the same to Congress only requesting that no member who hears this read, may allow himself to suppose us influenced by Local attachments, which is sometimes suspected, and of which we cou'd readily acquit ourselves by a single declaration was it necessary.

The Commissary of Military Stores Colo Flowers wants the determination of Congress whether the Elaboratory is to be established at York Town or not, he thinks the Ground on which the buildings are to be erected shou'd be purchased & wishes for instructions on that head, in whose name is it to be held &c? It falls within his department to provide Musquets, Carbines, Pistols, Swords & all military Accoutrements. He is trying to arrange that business and desires to know whether he shall Contract with the different manufacturers in this branch, especially for what will be wanted to fit out the Horse, we think he ought.

The Randolph Frigate is on her way down the River with several Merchantmen under Convoy, the Hornet & Fly attending them and we hope they will get safe out. That being once accomplished we shall be impatient to give you good accounts from Capt Biddle. We take the liberty to enclose Mr Jewells Account for the Inspection of the Treasury Board & if passed they will please to give us orders for payment.<sup>3</sup> Mr Young the sadler has frequently called on us for the Answer to his Acct sent down sometime since. Be pleased also to deliver the enclosed Memorial to the Honble Delagates of So Carolina, and receive for amusement a New York paper herewith. With perfect esteem & regard, We are sir, Your most obedt hble servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

[P.S.] The General officers that are here & those that have been here lately, all agree that the business to be done in this & the two ensuing months will be of such extent & of so great Consequence that Congress shou'd be on the Spot if possible, but if they dont choose to remove they shou'd make an addition to this Committee of several very clear headed sensible active members capable of going through the business.

Since writing the above, Genl Mifflin informs us you have given him an order on Mr Smith the Loan Officer who has not a farthing to give him, therefore his whole operations must be at a stand untill he can be supplied.

R.M.

P.S. Enclosed is the Instructions to Cap Coren a mast[er] said to be [a] usefull Officer, with a recommendation from Genls Gates & Mifflin respecting his Rank & pay which we believe ought to be complied with,

the sooner it is determined the better. Please to receive also a note from Mease & Caldwell just come in.<sup>4</sup>

RM

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:101.

<sup>2</sup> On February 8 Congress appropriated \$300,000 for the Executive Committee. *JCC*, 7:102.

<sup>3</sup> On February 13 Congress decided to pay Robert Jewell \$766 "for maintaining prisoners in the new gaol of Philadelphia, and for the salary of himself and his two assistants." *JCC*, 7:115.

<sup>4</sup> Later this date the Executive Committee also wrote the following letter to Hancock: "We have already written a long letter to Congress by this post, since which an express brought the enclosed dispatches from Genl Schuyler. We send them forward & detain the Express waiting untill you shall send back dispatches or an order for his dismissal & have the honor to remain, sir, Your obedt servts, Robt Morris, Geo Clymer." PCC, item 137, appendix, fol. 43. Schuyler's January 23 letter to Hancock and enclosures are in PCC, item 153, 3:43-87.

## Richard Henry Lee to John Page

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 4th 1777

Nothing material having occurred since I wrote you last in the military way, this serves chiefly to inclose you the Tyrants speech, which is a curious crafty piece of business. Curious it certainly is to find a Man on so public a situation announcing to the world his utter disregard of truth. Crafty it may be called, because of the mode taken to prove our good usage. He would have the world conclude that this good usage has been of his shewing, and therefore our ingratitude great in proceeding as we have done. The Court Logic seems clearly this—The American improvement in Arts & Arms shews they have been well used, it shews I have used them well, and therefore they are wicked in deposing me. Or in other words—George the second used the Americans well. George the 3d has abused them extremely. Therefore they are criminal in opposing George the 3d. The visit paid us by the British Ships, and, as we hear, the number of small craft they have seized in our narrow waters, prove incontestibly the disadvantage we shall forever be exposed to while we are in want of Marine force. Had our Gallies been in good order and fit for business, the Barges and small Craft of the enemy would never have dared to attempt the Capture of Vessels in our shallow, narrow waters. And I will venture to affirm that if we had 8 or 10 such Gallies as Congress have built in the Delaware, to carry 4 thirty two pounders each with 10, 6-pounders & 100 men Not less than a Squadron of Line of Battle Ships would venture up our Bay. Yours affectionately,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC).

## Robert Morris to John Jay

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 4th. 1777

Your favour of the 7th Ultò came safe to hand.<sup>1</sup> Timothy Jones is certainly a very entertaining agreeable man, one wou'd not judge so from any thing contained in his cold insipid letter of the 17th Sept<sup>r</sup>. unless you take pains to find the Concealed beauties therein.<sup>2</sup> The Cursory observation of a Sea Captain wou'd never *discover* them, but transferred from his hand to the penetrating Eye of a *Jay* the Diamonds Stand Confessed at once, it puts me in mind of a Search after the Philosophers Stone, but I believe not one of the followers of that Phantom have come so near the mark as you my Good Friend. I handed a Copy of your discoveries to the Committee which now Consists of Harrison, R.H. Lee, Hooper, Doct Witherspoon, Johnson, you, & myself & honestly told them who it was from because, *measures* are necessary in Consequence of it, but I have not recd any directions yet. I shou'd never doubt the success of measures Conducted by such able heads as those that take the lead in your Convention, I hate to pay Compliments and wou'd avoid the appearance of doing it but I cannot refrain from saying I love Duane, admire Mr. Livingston & have an Epithet for you if I had been writing to another. I am stationed here with Mr Walton of Georgia & my Colleague Mr Clymer as a Committee of Congress for transacting all Continental business that may be proper & necessary at this place. Abundance of it we have & I believe we dispatch about 7/8ths of that damn'd trash that used to take up 3/4ths of the debates in Congress; and give them no trouble about the matter, but we have this day wrote them pressingly to come back. Whether they will or not is uncertain as I am told some of them are attached to the place, others execrate it. I do not Condemn their flight from hence as I shou'd have done had I been at the distance you are, but I cannot spare time to explain myself for I write in haste & proceed to unfold a little business I want to trouble you with.

Major West the nephew of my Friend Will West was taken Prisoner at Fort Washington. He had made a kind of bargain with Mr Elliot late Collr. of New York to get exchanged for Mr. Jauncey junr. and I represented the matter to Congress, who very *wisely* passed the inclosed Resolve,<sup>3</sup> the agreement was that if Major West cou'd make interest with Congress, Mr Elliot cou'd do the needfull with Genl. Howe to affect this exchange, at least so I understand it. West is an Active good Officer, & has great interest in our back Country that wou'd enable him to recruit fast. Mr Jauncey I fancy may as well be in N York as Connecticut and I wish you wou'd forward this business of exchange if you think it right. My Compts to Mr Duane & Mr Livingston and I hope they will join you in it.

I wish you had done with your Convention. You are really wanted exceedingly in Congress. They are very thin, Hooper gone off with a



Fever, Tom Nelson with an appoplectic complaint. When I say gone off I dont mean to the other World, only to another part of this, one for Virginia & other for N Carolina. Harrison has barely weathered it, but he is mending. T. Johnson passed through here a few days ago a General for the Camp, Maryland is not represented, Jersey & Delaware seldom are, your State & this not so fully as they ought. We shall have a new appointment here soon. I wish it may do honor to us, but much I fear the reverse from the Names now talked off. Adieu my Dr Sir. God Bless you & grant Success to America in the present Contest, with Wisdom and Virtue to Secure Peace & happiness to her Sons in all future ages. I am with true regard Your most Obedt Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (NNC).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Timothy Jones was a name used by Silas Deane in his secret correspondence with Morris and Jay in 1776. His "cold insipid letter of the 17th Sepr." is in William Jay, *The Life of John Jay: with Selections from His Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers*, 2 vols. (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1833), 1:67. But "the Concealed beauties therein" is a reference to the portion of the letter Deane had written in invisible ink that Jay had developed and sent to Morris in his January 7 letter. This can be found in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:148. For information on Deane's letters to Jay and Morris in invisible ink, see Robert Morris to John Jay, September 23, 1776, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:52–53.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

[February 4, 1777]<sup>1</sup>

Upon motion in Congress whether the meeting held by the four New Engd states by deputies at Providence Decemr 25 1776 was a proper one and whether it did not stand in need of the Approbation of Congress to make it *valid*.

It was said by *Mr Saml Adams*. That a right to assemble upon all occasions to consult measures for promoting liberty & happiness was the priviledge of *freemen*—that it was contested by govr Hutchinson & that it was dreaded only by tyrants.

*Mr Richd Henry Lee*. It was said on the same side of the Question that we were not yet confederated—therefore no law of the union infringed.

*Col: Wilson* on the negative said that the design in the committee of the 4 New England States in sending their proceedings to congress was to demand their approbation.

That the same was clearly intimated by the tenor of the appointments from Rhode Island and Connecticut—that the committee had commanded, and countermanded continental troops—that the said troops

were to be paid by the continent—therefore that the business the Committee transacted was wholly *continental* and of course required the approbation of Congress.

*Mr John Adams* said that he lately travelled thro' New Engd. & that he was sure that the approbation of the congress of the meeting would give pleasure to the committee and their constituents. That their meeting was founded in necessity, that Altho' we were not confederated the same principles of equity & reason should govern us as if we were united by a confederacy—that the four New England states bore the same relation to the congress that four counties bore to a single State. These four counties have a right to meet to regulate roads, and affairs that relate to the poor, but they have no right to tax or execute any other branch of legislation. In like manner the four New Engd. States, or any Other four States have a right to meet upon matters wholly indifferent, but they have no right to touch upon Continental Subjects—that the committee from the 4 New Engd. States have touched upon continental Subjects, therefore the *meeting* stands in need of the approbation of the Congress.

*Dr Rush.* The desire of independance is natural not only to individuals but to communities. There was a time (near 200 years) when it was wrong to say a word agst. the dependance of the colonies upon Great Britain. A time came when it was equally criminal to enforce that dependance. The time may come & probably will come when it will be the interest of the united States to be independant of each other, but I can conceive of no temporal punishment to be severe eno' for that man who attempts to dissolve, or weaken the union for a century or two to come. I admire the proceedings of the committee assembled at Providence. They are full of political virtue & wisdom, and I think the other States will act wisely & virtuously in proportion as they resemble them. But I think the *meeting* is full of great and interesting consequences, and should be regarded with a serious & jealous eye. Their business was chiefly continental, and therefore they usurped the powers of congress as much as four counties would usurp the powers of legislation in a state shd. they attempt to tax themselves. The committee have in one instance in regulating the price of goods counterterred an express resolution of congress, and lastly tho' the meeting was necessary and no injustice intended or done by it to any state, yet it becomes us to remember that arbitrary power has often originated in justice & necessity.

This question was decided by a majority in the Committee of the whole house in the *affirmative*, but in the *negative* a few days Afterwards. It was reconsidered Feby 13rd.<sup>2</sup>

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush.

<sup>1</sup> For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1. Assignment of this date rests upon a report, dated "In Committee of the Whole, Feby. 4, 1777" (in the hand of James Wilson and

annotated by Charles Thomson), PCC, item 24, fol. 375, pertaining to statements made by Rush in the next to last paragraph of this entry. See *JCC*, 7:87-88.

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph was obviously written after February 4, but whether it was simply added to the preceding paragraphs or the entire entry was copied from other notes into this notebook after February 13 cannot be determined from the MS.

## Oliver Wolcott to Oliver Ellsworth

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Baltimore 4t Feby. 1777

I had Wrote to you a Letter Acknowledging your Favour of the 15 Ultimo and 'till now supposed I had sent it by Mr. Brown by whom I remitted the Papers which you sent for, but find I inadvertently failed of delivering the Letter to him. Besides the Papers which you Wrote for I also sent 4 Accounts Dr Forgue, Swift, D Barbur and J Phelps, which by Mr Brown accounts made out the 16 Novr. 1775 Marked to No. 14 by mistake as I imagine came with the Other Accounts.<sup>2</sup> I have also sent except No. 11 which was not with the other Papers and Never was in my Possession.<sup>3</sup> I have likewise remitted by him a List of Prisoners which were in Connecticut and their Paroles. As the List was incompleat and this Business was afterwards put under a different Direction I tho't it unnecessary to deliver it to Congress, so that I have now sent every Paper which respects our State that I was ever charged with. I have Enclosed to you the King or as he is called the Tyrant of Britain's speech to his Parliament, which probably enough you have already seen. Nothing material has Occured, within a few days except that three British Ships supposed to be the Roebuck and Two Frigates who have for some Time been intercepting The Trade at the Mouth of the Delaware here entered this Bay—probably for the same Purpose and to get Provisions. We have for some Time expected to hear something material from the Jersys, but as no Accounts of this kind yet arrive our expectations for the present are pretty much suspended. Wishing of you sir much Satisfaction in the necessary Business of settling the publick Accounts, I am sir, with respt, your Most Obedient, humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

RG (Ct).

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Ellsworth (1745-1807), Hartford lawyer, had been a member of the Connecticut Committee of the Pay Table since its creation in April 1775 and was thus involved in settling his state's accounts with Congress. He was appointed a delegate to Congress in October 1777 but did not serve until October 1778. *DAB*.

<sup>2</sup> At least two of these medical accounts had been sent to Wolcott in April 1776 with the prisoners' accounts mentioned below. See Wolcott to the Connecticut Committee of the Pay Table, May 4, 1776.

<sup>3</sup> For further details about these accounts, see Connecticut Delegates to Jonathan Trumbull, December 5, 1775.

## Marine Committee to Esek Hopkins

Sir

Philada. Feby 5th. 1777

By Consent of the Honorable Congress I have this day given instructions to Jno Paul Jones Esqr Commander of the Alfred to take upon him the Conduct of an Expedition wherein he will require the assistance of the Columbus, Cabot, Camden <sup>1</sup> & Sloop Providence, and You will please to order the Commanders to join him & to put themselves under his Command. I flatter myself with having your utmost exertions to get these Vessells well & expeditiously manned and compleatly fitted that they may sail soon as possible. I lately forwarded you a packet with instructions respecting the Frigates from the Marine Committee which I hope will arrive safe. I long to hear that you contrive ways & means to get rid of the Enemy in your Neighborhood & am with esteem sir your obedt hble

Servant,

Robt Morris, V.P. of  
the Marine Committee

P.S. My Compts to your Brother.

RC (CSmH). LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> The LB correctly names this ship the *Hampden*.

## Marine Committee to John Paul Jones

Sir

Philada. Feby 5th. 1777

I have frequently received your letters advising me the particulars of your several Cruizes, and with pleasure assure you that the Contents in every instance have been very acceptable, always entertaining & in many parts usefull. These letters I have from time to time communicated to the members of the Marine Committee all of whom express their satisfaction with your Conduct. You wou'd no doubt expect an answer from them to your proposal for a Cruize this Winter on the Coast of Africa,<sup>1</sup> and such they intended to give you long since, but the confusion occasioned by their removal from this City to Baltimore & the multiplicity of business that has unavoidably crowded on every member of Congress, put it out of their power to give that attention to your department that they wou'd always wish to carry into every American Concern. Thus Circumstanced they never doubted but your Active genius wou'd find usefull employment for the Ship you Command, as you were so near the Commodore & cou'd go cloathed with his Authority & they have not been disapointed for you have in this way made a most usefull & successfull Voyage to Cape Breton & thence to Boston. Major Frazer passing through this City (which I have never left) sent me an account of that Cruize



which appeared to be in your own handwriting. Pleased with your Success, I transmitted it to Congress and wrote that, if they pleased, I wou'd point out an enterprize or two for you to undertake & leave the Choice to yourself; this was agreed to, and my present design is to fullfill that promise.<sup>2</sup> When I made it, I had in view either to gratify your desire by undertaking an expedition as you proposed to the Coast of Africa, or to gratify my own by undertaking what I think will prove a more usefull one & nearer home. I have pretty good information that there is Stationed at Pensacola only two or three Sloops of war from 10 to 16 Guns, and that at that place there is not less than 100 pieces of Brass Artillery which our Armies are much in want of. These insignificant Sloops of war lie there in perfect Security or now & then take a Cruize along the Coast of Georgia & Carolina. Shou'd they be met with they will inevitably become your prizes. Shou'd they be out of the way Pensacola may become the more easy prey. It is true that Governor Chester has been trying to put that place in a posture of defence, but he has no Troops and the inhabitants will never defend it, therefore my plan is that you shou'd take the Alfred, Columbus, Cabot, Hamden, and Sloop Providence, proceed first to the Island of St Christophers where a sudden & unexpected attack will carry that place being very defenceless. There is a Number of Canon & Stores there, as well as merchandize of various sorts that we are in want of and I fancy you will make a considerable booty. This however is not what I have so much in View as to alarm not only the Inhabitants but the whole British Nation. It will oblige the ministers to provide for the Security & protection of every Island they have & by that means they must divide their Force & leave our Coasts less carefully guarded. From St. Kitts (where your stay must be short) you can proceed down to Pensacola. I apprehend the best passage might be down the South side of Hispaniola & then you might give an alarm to the North side of Jamaica by putting into some of the outports there, cutting out their Ships &c in all which however you must be expeditious or their Fleet will be after you. Shou'd you decline meddling with Jamaica the best passage will be down the No Side of Hispaniola, through the Passage of Cape St Nicholas & Cape Maize & then down the So Side of Cuba. When you arrive at Pensacola it may be well done to send a Brig & a Sloop to Cruize off the mouth of the Mississipi so long as you remain in that quarter but they shou'd wear English Colours & never go so near into the Balize as to be known for any thing but English Cruizers. There is at this time not less than £100,000 Sterlg Value in goods up that River the remittances for which will come away in the months of March, April & May, in Indico, Rice, Tobacco, Skins & Furs, so that this alone is an object worthy of your attention, but as I have said before, destroying their Settlements & spreading alarms, shewing & keeping up a Spirit of Enterprize that will oblige them to defend their extensive possessions at all points is of infinitely more Consequence to the United States of America than all the Plunder that

can be taken. If they divide their Force we shall have elbow room & that gained we can turn about & play our parts to the best advantage which we cannot do now, being constantly cramped in one part or another. It has long been clear to me that our infant Fleet cannot protect our own Coasts & that the only effectual relief it can afford us is to attack the Enemies defenceless places & thereby oblige them to Station more of their Ships in their own Countries or to keep them employed in following ours, and either way we are relieved so far as they do it. I do not pretend to give you any Account of the Coasts or Harbours, Strength of Fortifications or mode of attack, for I cannot doubt your being well acquainted with these things, knowing as I do that you have been a Commander in the West India Trade & at any rate your appearance will be unexpected, the enemy unprepared, they have no Troops and the very sound of a Great Gun will frighten them into submission. Govr Chester will no doubt know where the Brass Artillery are deposited and be glad to surrender them as a ransom for himself & his Capital. When your business is done at Pensacola you may give them an alarm at St Augustine, but here they have some Troops and you must be carefull of your men. I think you shou'd carry with you as many marines as possible for they will be usefull & necessary in all your Land Excursions. The Southern Colonies wish to see part of their Navy and if you find it Convenient & safe you might recruit & refit at Georgia, South or North Carolina, there make Sale of such part of your Prize Goods &c as wou'd be usefull to them, learn where was the safest Port to the Northward & then push along to such place of safety as might be necessary for refitting & remanning the Fleet. Shou'd you prefer going to the Coast of Africa you have the Consent of the Marine Committee, but in that case I apprehend you only want the two Ships & Sloop Providence. Remember it is a long voyage, that you cannot destroy any English settlements there, and that if you meet any of their men of War in those Seas they will be much superiour to you in Strength &c. You may it is true do them much mischief, but the same may be done by Cruizing to windward of Barbadoes as all their Guinea men fall in there. However you are left to your choice and I am sure will choose for the best. Shou'd there be a difficulty in getting all the Vessells fully manned with so many Seamen as you may think necessary, take the more Marines & you will get Seamen from Prizes in the Course of your Voyage. It is a Standing instruction from the Marine Committee to the Commanders in the American Navy to be carefull of their Ships, the Materials & Stores, to use well their officers and men, preserving however strict discipline, to treat Prisoners with Humanity & generosity, and to keep them advised of their proceedings as frequently as Circumstances will permit.<sup>3</sup> Wishing you the utmost Success, I am, Sir, Your Obedt hble Servant,

Robt Morris V. P.  
of the Marine Committee

P.S. If you get the Brass pieces land them in the first port in these States & have them valued.

RC (DNA: PCC, item 168). Written and signed by Robert Morris. LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). The LB is dated February 1, and Paullin, who took his text from that source, repeated that date in *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:65–70.

<sup>1</sup> For further information about Jones' proposed African cruise, see his letters to Morris of October 17, 1776, and January 12, 1777, in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 6:1302–4, 7:938–39.

<sup>2</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 16, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Before Jones was able to carry out any of Morris' suggestions, he was ordered to sail to France. See Marine Committee to Jones, May 9, 1777; and William M. Fowler, Jr., *Rebels under Sail: The American Navy during the Revolution* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976), pp. 99–101.

## Marine Committee to Robert Morris

Sir, Baltimore Feby. 5th 1777

Judging it of the last consequence to the Public that the Military Stores probably lodged for the Continent in the West Indies should be brought over with all possible expedition, we have determined to send all the armed Vessels mentioned in your letter to be now at Philadelphia, and the Frigate Randolph likewise, on this business. The Island that each Vessel is to go to, and the Port she is to aim at returning to, is left to your discretion. You will please Sir to give the necessary orders for the quickest possible execution of this important service.

We are Sir Your most obedient servants,

John Hancock	William Ellery
Richard Henry Lee	Wm. Whipple
Saml. Chase	Nathan Brownson
Oliver Wolcott	Tho Burke
	Jona D Sergeant

RC (MdAN). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Brownson, Burke, Chase, Ellery, Hancock, Sergeant, Whipple, and Wolcott. Endorsed by Morris: "answd. 15 Feby. 1777." No letter of that date from Morris to the Marine Committee has been found.

## Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant to John Hart

Dear Sir Baltimore 5th February 1777

Pursuant to the Appointment of the Legislature of New Jersey, I have attended the Congress as one of their Delegates from their first sitting at

Baltimore to this Time. As, during this Period, publick Affairs have taken a much happier Turn & my own private Circumstances have assumed rather a melancholy Complexion, I hope your honourable Body will excuse my wishing to retire to the Management of my private Concerns.

The Loss of my House is the least part of my Misfortune, as my Attention to Politicks during these unhappy Times has at once superseded my Business & prevented the Collecting my Accounts 'till the greater part of my Debtors, it is to be feared, are either ruined or not to be found. For these Reasons I find it necessary to apply myself to some Business for the Support of my Family. My Attendance in Congress must be a Bar in the Way of all such Attempts & I must therefore beg that some other person may be appointed in my Stead. I shall however attend 'till a Person can be appointed to succeed me & am Sr. Yr. most obedt. hble Servt.<sup>1</sup>

Jona D. Sergeant

RC (NN). Addressed: "The honorable John Hart Esqr., Speaker of the Assembly of New Jersey, Haddonfield."

<sup>1</sup> Although he twice obtained brief leaves of absence during the next several weeks—"on account of his health" and "to visit his family"—Sergeant continued to serve in Congress until September 1777. See *JCC*, 7:156, 219; and Burnett, *Letters*, 2:lv-lvi.

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Thursday Feby. 6th.

Lodged last night for the first Time in my new Quarters, at Mrs. Ross'es in Markett Street, Baltimore a few Doors below the fountain Inn.

The Gentlemen from Pensilvania and Maryland, complain of the growing Practice of distilling Wheat into Whisky. They say it will become a Question whether the People shall eat bread or drink Whisky.

The Congress sits in the last House at the West End of Market Street, on the South Side of the Street. A long Chamber, with two fire Places, two large Closets, and two Doors. The House belongs to a Quaker, who built it for a Tavern.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield): 2:257.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town Feby 6. 1777, Thursday Noon

Congress are very anxious, that some immediate Steps should be taken by our State, not only as to the person of Captain Patterson, but as to



the Payment of the Engagement entered into by the Continental and your Agent. Capt. Patterson is viewed as a pirate, and after Examination, if the facts should appear to You to be well founded, it may be well to consider, if it would not be proper to send him to Martinico for Trial there, by the Law of Nations.<sup>1</sup> If our State shall pay the Value of the Vessel & Goods seized by Patterson, would it not be proper to inform the Governor of Martinique that the whole would have been returned, but for the Risque? If no Remittance can be made but by produce, it will be an equal Risque to send back the Vessel. Could not Mr. Morriss pay the Money for our State? An opportunity of writing will present itself in a few Days. Would it not be proper for our State to write a Letter, disavowing the Conduct of Capt. Patterson, and engaging Payment as soon as possible, & mentioning the Men of War in our Bay, which may delay the Remittance.

Mr. Zachariah Campbell, in a Letter from Vienna, of 1st Inst. writes to his Brother Capt. Campbell "That the Tories in Sussex, Som[er]set & Worcester Co[un]tys, have been assembling for some days, they have 250 Men collected at Pantens Mill, about 9 Miles from Salisbury, and 'tis reported they have three Field pieces which they received from the Roebuck, with some Men, with Intention to seize the Magazine, & destroy the property of the Whiggs. Coll. Dashiell is now at Salisbury with what Whiggs he could collect, about 130, & is to be reinforced on Monday, by eight Companies from this County."

Captain Nicholson's Tender brings accounts that there are three Men of War in the bay, one at the Tangiers, one at Smiths Point, and one in the middle, & that it is reported some Men, with two Field pieces are landed from the Roebuck.

Congress has ordered Colo. Wm. Buchanans Battalion, which was ordd to Camp, to march with Colo. Gist & some armed vessells to prevent any Communication from the Ships, and to prevent their plundering.<sup>2</sup>

I suggest my fears of a Difference injurious to the service, if Genl. Hooper should march on this Business. Colo. Gist will not submit to be commanded by that Gentleman.

I beg Leave to remind the Board of the Opinion of General Gates to the necessary Orders respecting the Fort here.

Several Recommendations have gone from Congress to our State. I hope they will be duly attended to.

If Advice Boats are not sent outside of the Capes, several of our Store Vessells may fall into the Hands of our Enemies.

The post is not come in—no News.

I must again repeat the Necessity of a Representation.

I am, Gent., with Respect & Regard, Your Most Obedt. Servant,  
Saml. Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> For the case of Capt. William Patterson, who had illegally seized a vessel bearing a flag of truce, see Committee of Secret Correspondence to William Bingham, February 1, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:96-97.

## John Hancock to William Aylett

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 6th. 1777

I have it in Charge from Congress to forward the Inclos'd Resolves relative to your Department, and to Direct that you take effectual Steps for Carrying the same into immediate execution.<sup>1</sup>

The Provisions furnished by the Contractors in your State, as well as the Indian Corn you are now order'd to purchase, you will take care to have lodged in places of the greatest Security.

You will perceive the Congress have Augmented your Salary to Seventy five Dollars per Month.

I am Sir, your most Obedt & very hum sert, J H Pt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "William Aylett Esqr., Depy Commissary Genl., Virginia."

<sup>1</sup> Congress had recently approved resolves authorizing Aylett to retain certain provisions he had obtained from Virginia contractors, raising his salary to \$75 a month, and ordering him to buy 10,000 barrels of Indian corn. *JCC*, 7:46, 73, 92. The first resolve was prompted by Aylett's January 12 letter to Hancock. PCC, item 78, 1:49-50.

## John Hancock to Philip Schuyler

Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 6th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress being necessary for your Information, & Direction, & relative to the Department immediately under your Command, I do myself the Honor of transmitting the same, and am to request your Attention to them. They are so explicit that I shall not enlarge.<sup>1</sup>

The Extract of a Letter from the Committee of Congress at Philada. with Regard to an Expedition to the Northward is transmitted herewith for your Consideration, the Congress having referred it entirely to you, to determine on the Propriety or Impropriety of that Measure.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be with Sentiments of the utmost Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. Sert. J.H. Presidt.

P.S. I have delivered a Duplicate of the enclosed Resolves to Genl. Gates.<sup>3</sup>

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> Since Hancock's last letter to Schuyler on January 15, Congress had passed a number of resolves pertaining to the northern military department. *JCC*, 7:41, 45, 50, 61–62, 64, 75, 84.

<sup>2</sup> See Executive Committee to Hancock, January 16, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Hancock to Schuyler, February 23, 1777.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Feby 6th. 1777.

This will be delivered to you by Mr. Burke from the Island of Jamaica, a Gentleman of Spirit and well affected to the American Cause, who has applied to Congress to be taken into the Service of these States. They have directed that his application be referred to you, that you may do therein as you shall think proper. The Congress have received very favourable Accounts of the great Attachment Mr. Burke has to the Cause of America, and of his Zeal to do every Thing in his Power to support her Liberties.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honour to be, with perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Washington subsequently authorized Bartholomew Burke, a former ensign in the British army, to raise a company of Continental infantry. See *JCC*, 7:56, 73, 87; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:245–46.

On this day Richard Peters also wrote a letter to Washington in behalf of the Board of War, pointing out that in some recent recruiting instructions he had failed to distinguish between recruits who enlisted for only three years and those who did so for the duration of the war. Washington Papers, DLC. For Washington's reply, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:195.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

Dear Sir:

Baltimore, 6th Feby, 1777.<sup>1</sup>

The events of war having not been considerable lately, this is chiefly intended to enclose you the British king's speech to his Parliament, which you will see in the News paper. Skirmishes are daily happening between our troops and the foraging parties of the enemy, in which we seldom fail to beat them and take their forage. Their numbers are this way daily decreasing, and the survivors in great distress for food and feed. The many horses we have taken from them are emaciated extremely. If our new army can be got up in good time I hope we shall deal effectually with these Tyrant Tools. Mr. Page writes us that a Vessel has arrived with you that brings continental soldier's cloaths.<sup>2</sup> I hope that these being put on the backs of your new recruits, will greatly forward the new inlist-

ments. That the troops should expeditiously join the General is a point so clearly necessary, that I am sure you will promote it with all your power.

I am, very affectionately yours,

Richard Henry Lee.

MS not found; reprinted from William Wirt Henry, *Patrick Henry, Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), 3:42-43.

<sup>1</sup> Slightly variant transcripts of this letter, both dated February 5, are in William C. Rives Papers, DLC, and *The Collector* 55 (February 1941): item 937.

<sup>2</sup> For a reference to Page's later comments concerning this vessel and its cargo, see Lee to John Page, February 19, 1777, note.

## John Adams' Diary

[February] 7th Fryday [1777]

Dined, about half a Mile out of Town at Mr. [William] Lux's, with Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. S. Adams, Mr. Lovell, Mr. Hall, Dr. Thornton, a Mr. Harrison, Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ and Mr. George Lux, and two Ladies Mrs. Lux and her Sister. This Seat is named Chatworth, and an elegant one it is. Has a large Yard, inclosed with Stone in Lime and before the Yard two fine Rows of large Cherry Trees, which lead out to the public Road. There is a fine Prospect about it. Mr. Lux and his Son are sensible Gentlemen. I had much Conversation with George about the new form of Government adopted in Maryland.

George is the young Gentleman, by whom I sent Letters to my friends from Philadelphia, when the Army was at Cambridge, particularly to Coll. Warren, whom and whose Lady Lux so much admired.

The whole Family profess great Zeal in the American Cause. Mr. Lux lives like a Prince.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:257.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feby: 7. 1777

I am at last after a great deal of Difficulty, settled in comfortable Quarters, but at an infinite Expence. . . .<sup>1</sup> The Price I pay for my Board is more moderate than any other Gentlemen give, excepting my Colleagues, who are all in the same Quarters, and at the same Rates except Mr. H[ancock] who keeps an House by himself.

The Prices of Things here, are much more intollerable than at Boston.

The Attempt of New England to regulate Prices, is extreemly popular in Congress, who will recommend an Imitation of it to the other States:



for my own Part I expect only a partial and a temporary Relief from it. And I fear that after a Time the Evils will break out with greater Violence. The Water will flow with greater Rapidity for having been dammed up for a Time. The only radical Cure will be to stop the Emission of more Paper, and to draw in some that is already out, and devise Means effectually to support the Credit of the Rest.

To this End We must begin forthwith to tax the People, as largely as the distressed Circumstances of the Country will bear. We must raise the Interest from four to six Per Cent.<sup>2</sup> We must if possible borrow Silver and Gold from abroad. We must, above all Things, endeavour this Winter, to gain farther Advantages of the Enemy, that our Power may be in somewhat higher Reputation than it is, or rather than it has been.<sup>3</sup>

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:153–54.

<sup>1</sup> Suspension points in MS.

<sup>2</sup> Adams' support for such action by Congress can be seen in Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates, February 10 and 14, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Adams wrote another letter to Abigail this day describing the town of Bethlehem, Pa., and the life of its Moravian inhabitants, where he had visited on his recent trip from Massachusetts to Baltimore. Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:154–56.

## Board of War to the Executive Committee

Gentlemen

War Office Feby 7th. 1777.

As a large Quantity of Powder is immediately wanted for the Northern Department, Congress have directed the Board of War to send twenty Tons of Cannon & ten Tons of Pistol Powder from hence. Workmen are not to be procured here to get the Powder in Readiness in so short a Time as the Board could wish, you will be pleased therefore to lend your Assistance in this Business lest the Service suffer by Delay. The Board request that you will send from Philadelphia Ten Tons of Cannon & five Tons of Pistol Powder to Ticonderoga addressed to General Schuyler Commander in Chief of the Northern Department or the Commanding Officer at Ticonderoga, giving Orders to the Officer you send with the Escort that he call on General Schuyler or the Commanding Officer at Albany where perhaps he may be discharged & the Powder sent on by another Conveyance; if not he must proceed thro' the Journey. Coopers & proper Persons are employed for the Purpose & as soon as the Powder can be possibly got ready the Thirty Tons shall be sent to Philadelphia, Part whereof to replace what you send & the Remainder to proceed to Ticonderoga.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honour to be, Your very obed & most humble Servt,<sup>2</sup>

Richard Peters Secy

RC (DNA: PCC, item 147).

<sup>1</sup> For some account of the Executive Committee's difficulties in complying with this request, see its February 20 letter to the Board of War. In regard to this issue Peters wrote this letter to the Executive Committee on February 27 in the Board of War's behalf: "I enclose by Order of the Board an Invoice of Part of the thirty Tons of Powder mentioned to be destined for Ticonderoga, the Residue will be speedily sent & after deducting that sent from Philadelphia the Board request you will order the other fifteen Tons on as speedily as possible. It is shipped by the Elk Packett & the Shipper has Orders to wait on you as soon as he arrives." PCC, item 147, fol. 91.

<sup>2</sup> On February 10 and 14 Peters also wrote letters for the Board of War directing the Executive Committee to provide "Cloaths, Arms & Acoutrements" for the Second and Seventh Virginia Regiments, which were under orders to join forces with Washington. *Ibid.*, fols. 67, 71.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feby 7 1777

Motion in Congress that the President write to every State excepting Virginia and Massachusetts Bay recommending a fuller representation, proposed to leave out the Exceptions, passed in the Negative. Amendment proposed that when ever any State was unrepresented the President Should write requesting a full representation. Agreed by a Majority. Motion to be reconsidered. Amendment proposed that when ever any State was represented by less than three President should write &c. Rejected. Question upon the whole as amended Nos 5, Ayes 4, 1 Divided.

In this Debate the States fully represented insisted on the Exceptions that it might appear they had no need of a Memento. Several other States insisted that no state ought to be permitted to Commit a Vote in the General Council of the States to less than three. That less nor even that Number would Supply Committees. It was answered to the first that every State had made her representation as best Suited her Circumstances, that many were unable to spare or Support One more Numerous. That each was best Judge how many of her Citizens she would Trust, and to what length She would Trust them. That there was no need of publicly calling on them for a representation more full because they already wished the same thing but found it Inconvenient to be Effected. That therefore those who had any representation at all had [already] done what their Circumstances permit [. . .] for greater Exertions. To the Second that the repre[sentatives of] the States who had few refused nor [. . .] That the weight and Trust were certainly too great for any one person but it was an evil that Could not at present be remedied, and therefore it must be born. That requiring three to form a Quorum would Embarass several States and leave Such State often without any representation at all, because if any Accident prevented the attendance of one, the Vote was Necessarily lost,

and any state would prefer a vote by one of her Del[eg]ates rather than No Vote at all.

North Carolina (having only one Delegate present) urged that the arguments Cavilled at the Insufficiency of One Delegate for so Important a Trust were sensibly felt by the Delegate who 'already tho' but a very few days in Congress found his Experience and abilities far Inferior to his Duty, but this was not the fault of his Country who could not prevail on her abler men to undertake a Business so arduous and Inconvenient. That she had Indeed appointed three but never Expected that they should be always in Service at Once, because the *(Duty was too Heavy for one)* absence was too long from their private Families and affairs and she had not Funds to support a greater Number. That One who Expected to have been here was prevented by Illness.<sup>1</sup> The other had Just departed and after long attendance was permitted to return home.<sup>2</sup> That the Single Representation of that State was the Misfortune of the Delegate on whom all, Incompetent as he is, the burthen of so high a Trust had fallen and also the misfortune of his Country who in the absence of his more able Colleagues could not be so well served. That Considering it as a matter which Each State had an Exclusive right to Judge of the Delegate could not agree that Congress should at all Interfere with it. That having Just informed the Congress that one of the [delegates had been?] permitted by his Country to return, and that the [consequence] is that only two would be in Service the Delegate Considered the ammendment relative to three is implying a Censure on his Country and he must therefore protest against it. The Intention to Censure was disclaimed.

MS (NcU). There are three partially overlapping sets of Burke's notes of debates in Burke Papers, NcU; Governors' Letter Books, 1.1, Nc-Ar; and Emmet Collection, NN. The second set consists of the notes Burke sent to North Carolina governor Richard Caswell in order to keep him abreast of the proceedings of Congress, whereas the first and third include notes Burke retained for his own use that once probably formed part of the same manuscript. Since Burke made these notes expressly for the purpose of keeping North Carolina officials informed of the more important actions of Congress, it seems curious that, with but two exceptions, he stopped making them after Congress' return to Philadelphia in March.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Hewes.

<sup>2</sup> William Hooper.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town Feby. 7th. 1777.

The Marine Committee are very desirous, that the Tender of the Defence should be well manned, & under a bold active, prudent officer, sent down with the Troops destined for Som[er]set & Worcester County.

Congress will afford every assistance in their power to prevent any Communication between the Insurgents and the Men of War, and any plunder of our Islands or Coasts. It is earnestly wished and expected that our State will order every vessell they have and can obtain on the same Duty. I shall speak to Captain Cook about his Tender.

No letters from General Washington.

The Post is not yet arrived.

With Respect, your Obedt. Servt.

S Chase

RC (MdAA).

## John Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 7t. 1777

Your favr. inclosing the Deposition of Capt Patterson was Rec'd & laid before the Congress.<sup>1</sup> The Second Regimt. of Virginia Troops together with Col Buchanan's Regimt. of Militia are under orders to Repair to the Eastern Shore for the Suppression of the Insurgents in the Counties of Somerset & Worcester.<sup>2</sup> Two Arm'd Vessells are ready & the Transports are also getting ready for the Accommodation of the Troops. These with the Troops you may order, it is Judg'd will be sufficient for the purpose.

I am, Sir, Your most Obedt Sert,

J H Pt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "To Daniel of St Thomas Jenifer Esqr, Presidt of Council of Safety."

<sup>1</sup> The council of safety's February 6 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 70, fol. 139, and *Md. Archives*, 16:122. Capt. William Patterson's deposition about an insurrection in Somerset County is in PCC, item 70, fols. 143-45.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:96-97. For accounts of this episode, see also Charles J. Truitt, *Breadbasket of the Revolution: Delmarva in the War for Independence* (Salisbury, Md.: Historical Books, Inc. 1975), pp. 59-68; and Ronald Hoffman, *A Spirit of Dissension: Economics, Politics, and the Revolution in Maryland* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), pp. 196-205.

## Marine Committee to John Bradford

Sir

Philadelphia Feby. 7th 1777

Your Letters of the 21 December & 17th January to the Marine Committee<sup>1</sup> are with me and I have great pleasure in acknowledging on behalf of that Committee your Zeal and attention to the Public business. The tiding contained in those Letters was very acceptable and I was particularly pleased with Captain Jones's success. By this Express I send him



orders for an other Cruize,<sup>2</sup> but by an expression in one of your Letters I imagine he or you have wrote to the Committee and proposed altering the Ship Alfred, that Letter must have passed through here without coming to my hands and the Committee have said nothing to me about it. Should they give any Orders that contradict mine let them be obeyed but if nothing contradictory, Captain Jones will abide by what I have wrote him. I have observed that you frequently did propose discharging those Vessels that were fitted out as Cruizers by General Washington and the Committee were always of your opinion but some how or other in the multiplicity of business and in their late confusion they omitted to give you orders. Now Sir, as I know it was their desire to have those Vessels paid off and dismissed the service I will venture to authorize your doing it and shall send the Committee a Copy of this Letter which you may deem a proper authority: But as I have mentioned in another Letter your employing one of those Vessels to carry the dispatches to France, you must either keep that one in pay or buy her, which I should much prefer, and if any of the rest of them are good Vessels, suitable for Cruizers I should think it best to buy them and continue them in the service, especially as I suppose some of the Commanders and Officers have merit to deserve a continuance in the service: but I am utterly against continuing them on hire and so I think are all the Committee. You may inform Mr. Turnbull that altho the Congress wish by all means to procure the Public Stores on the most reasonable terms possible, yet they cannot desire to injure One part of the Public service for the sake of another, and that the Honest Tars ought to have fair play in the sales of their Prizes. We don't wish to take any advantages of them but would chuse he would guard against monopolizers, Forestallers and combinations of that kind. If you can persuade Commodore Hopkins to give up his Guns you may, but I dont think the Committee will order it as there has already been some altercation on that subject. On Behalf of the Marine Committee I am, sir, Your Obed servant,

Robert Morris V. P.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> An extract of Bradford's December 21 letter is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:539.

<sup>2</sup> See Marine Committee to John Paul Jones, February 5, 1777.

## Robert Morris to John Bradford

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 7th. 1777

I have already wrote to you two or three Official letters this morning & now come to treat of what Concerns myself & my Friends.<sup>1</sup> The only private letter I have of yours unanswered is dated the 16 Decr. which indeed does not require any reply and you wou'd learn by a letter I wrote you

sometime since that I suspected some of yours to me must have miscarried. Indeed it was clearly so, as you wrote respecting the purchase of a Vessel, as if I had been previously made acquainted with the Circumstances which I never was. I long to hear from you in answer to my letter of the 24 Decr. & think it is now high time. Untill such Answer Comes I can say nothing respecting any purchases or Speculations you may have made, except that I deem myself bound by my orders & shall chearfully acquiesce therewith. I wrote you lately respecting a Brig Called the Joseph, Capt Mosely, belonging to my Friends Hewes & Smith of Edenton No. Carolina.<sup>2</sup> It seems she was taken by a Privateer from Newberry Port, the Papers are now before Congress and I suppose will be transmitted from them to your President & Council. Whilst I was writing this letter Mr. Josiah Hewes of this City Brother to Mr. Jos. Hewes of No. Carolina called on me with Copies of the Sundry papers that are laid before Congress, all of which I transmit you herewith together with Mr Hewe's letter to his Brother, and really if your State do not take up this matter as they ought & procure effectual remedy & redress for the Injuries already done & to prevent the like in future, We may bid adieu to our Union, and submit at once to the Gallig Yoak of Great Britain, for that will assuredly be the Consequence of these Piracy's on one another. This is the Second Vessel Mr Hewes has had Treated in this way & it is intolerable. You never informed us when his other Brig the Fanny, Capt. Tokely, sailed, I shou'd be glad to know that, & what measures you took with Capt Payne who seems to be the Owner of the present Pirate. The papers sent relative to this affair are, Capt Moselys affidavit respecting the Capture, a Memorial & remonstrance from the State of No Carolina to the State of Massachusetts Bay, a letter from their President to the Presidt of Massachusetts, a Memorial from the State of No Carolina to the General Congress, a letter from their President to the President of Congress, an Invoice & Valuation of Vessel & Cargo, Jos. Hewes his letter to his Brother Josiah Hewes & also an extract of Hewes & Smiths letter to me, by which you'l see they ultimately fix their dependance on me to procure justice & take care of their Interest but what shall I say as to their Brig supposing her to have arrived safe. It surely cannot be possible that any judge has or ever will condemn her, she must then most probably be waiting for orders. I make no doubt but Congress will write spiritedly to your State on this Subject, and in the mean time you may be pleased to Communicate these papers to them, remonstrate against the owner & comm[ande]r of this Privateer for this Act of Piracy, Claim Vessel & Cargo with Damages, Sue them for the whole & Pro[secute] the Captain if it can be done as a [. . .] a Rascall deserves hanging without [. . .] such Villains as this that disg[race . . .] & will ruin our Cause, if Mr. Payne [. . .] same person that took the Fanny I [. . .] a premeditated plan to Seize every [. . .] & he shou'd be prosecuted Accordingly [. . .] or Letters of Marque in which these [. . .] away & they never be entrusted with any again. Value put on

the Vessell & Cargo is not equal to what they wou'd sell for here at this time & had she performed her voyage they wou'd have sold higher in No Carolina.

Shou'd this Vessell & Cargo be in your Port I think the Owners of the Privateer shou'd be Condemned to deliver her up to the Owners in No Carolina, that they shou'd pay the full Value for every thing embezzelled, that they shou'd pay for loss of time, Wear & tear, that a master & hands shou'd be hired to carry her to Edenton in No Carolina, the Vessell & Cargo to be insured there & the Owners to pay all the Cost. This I hope you will have done & send her to the Owners soon as possible. They want Vessells in North Carolina, having Cargoes waiting for them, therefore it will not do for them to sell her. They [. . .] want Salt, Bark & all the other articles there [as much] as they can anywhere. In short all [I can say?] on this Subject is, that if you get the [. . .] let] her be well fitted with Sails, Rigging and [. . .] valued before she sails & send her to [Messrs. Hewes] & Smith at Edenton with as much of [. . .] as you can get, put in a good honest [master]. Insure the value of the Cargo & advise [. . .] she is to sail & when she does sail. I depend [upon you] to do every thing in your power to serve these Worthy Gentn & am

RC (DLC photostat). Morris' signature and the ends of approximately ten lines torn from the original.

<sup>1</sup> Only one of these letters has been found; see preceding entry.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; but see Morris to Nathaniel Shaw, January 23, 1777.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir

Baltimore 7th Feby 1777

I have receiv'd your favor of 2d Decr but not 'till the 26th Jany.<sup>1</sup> What occasions this delay in the posts I know not, but suppose the fault must lay with the Post Master Genl. He has lately had a Rap, which I hope will have a good effect. I am sorry there is such Backwardness in Col Longs Regiment to March, but its what I always feared. I hope the new army will soon be rais'd, for this Method of calling out the Militia to march such a distance, is the most ruinous plan that ever was invented. I am sorry you want any thing to keep up your Spirits. I shod think the Glorious cause in which we are ingaged is sufficient for that purpose. The prospect of laying a foundation of Liberty & Happiness for Posterity & securing an Asilum for all who wish to injoy those Blessings is an object in my opinion sufficient to raise the mind above every misfortune. The loss of Forts Washington, & Lee, is not I hope to be imputed to Treachery, or Cowardice, but rather to want of Experience. This defect time will supply, & the enormous ravages committed by the Enemy wherever they have pass'd will teach the People wisdom, & inspire them to Noble Deeds.



The Principle objects of attention is, to raise & supply the army, & prevent the Depreciation of the Currency. The last is the most difficult, but I hope not impracticable. The proceedings of your convention at Providence, has been transmited to Congress by Govr Trumbull & in general highly approved of, but the recommendation to issue money on interest universally condemn'd. I hope there will be no need of Issuing any, but if that cannot be avoided, I sincerely wish the evil may not be accumulated by adding interest. I cod wish N.H. had followed the example of her neighbouring sister states, in laying a large tax. That is certainly one of the wisest steps that can be taken, nothing in my opinion can tend more to establish the Currency & the People never can be better able to pay a tax then at Present. I hope a recommendation will soon go to the several States to sink the money emited by them as soon as possible. There is more unanimity in Congress than ever, the *little* Southern jealousies have almost subsided, & the Dickinsonian Politics are Banish'd. J Adams & Lovell are arriv'd from Massachusetts, an exceeding good representation from Virginia, a new member from N. Carolina (one Mr Burke) who I think is the Best man I have seen from that Country. Business goes on smoothly within doors & I am told the recruiting service goes on Briskly without. By Private letters from Spain of 17th Novr there seems to be no doubt of a general war in Europe. On the whole I think affairs wear a *favorable* aspect, tho' we have heard nothing from our Commissioners but are in daily expectation of very pleasing Intelligence from them. France, Spain, & Prussia, its probable are meditating some grand plan. *I believe we may as well ceade Hanover to Prussia, & give Great Britain to France;* what think you of this scheme? I suppose you have seen the British Tyrants speech, but least it may have escap'd you I inclose it. I dont know how it may strike your fancy, but it pleases me much. He now thinks the contest Arduous & notwithstanding the assurances of [neutrality] from the several Courts of Europe he thinks it necessary to take care of himself. I fancy the wreck begins to see his danger. Authentic accots of the cruelties exercised by the Enemy in New Jersey are collecting & will soon be Publish'd. We are now sending off about 600 men to suppress a Tory faction in two of the Counties of this state on the Eastern shore; this business I expect will soon be effected when the troops are to march on to join Genl Washington. Three men of war now lay in Chesepeak Bay who have taken several vessels one in perticular outward bound, with a load of Tobaco for the Public accot.

It is a long time since I received a line from N.H. The latest was by Mr. Betten which were dated in Decr. It gives me great pain that Mr. Betten shod be so long detain'd, but there was no possibility of avoiding it, the Treasury being almost empty, & the most pressing demands from all Quarters, so that we have been in a perplex'd Scituation, but have now got pretty well over those Difficulties, there being only one demand of consequence now on the Treasury. I wish the accots may be sent forward



and a requisition for more money as soon as possible, so that the money may be forwarded when an opportunity offers. I have given it as my opinion to the President that he advance 400 Dollars to Mr. Betten and charge it to the state of N.H. and he (Mr Betten)- to be accountable to the state for that sum, the whole of his expences will then be a fair charge against the Continent. When do you think of coming this way again? I shall not be able to stand it above three months longer, & Col. Thorton seems determin'd to return home in May, so I hope you'll get a good Colleague and relieve us the [beginning] of May at farthest. If you give me timely notice of Your coming, I'll meet you half way. I already find the want of exercise notwithstanding I have had a ride of 100 miles within two months. This place is so intolerable muddy there is no such thing as walking, & I have really no time to ride.

Please to give best respects to Docr. Thompson, I am half a letter in debt to him, but fear I shall not be able to pay him, by this conveyence, but shall very soon, as I love to be punctual in paying Debts, especially of this sort, I wish he & some other of my Friends wou'd increase my obligations in this way. While I am on this subject I must beg leave to remind you, that I have not heard so often from you as I cou'd wish, but flatter myself when you recollect how anxious you used to be to know how affairs were going on at home, that you will not be unmindful of me. In the mean time be assured I am with real esteem, Yor Sincere Friend & Humbt Sevt,

Wm. Whipple

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> Bartlett's December 2, 1776, letter to Whipple is in *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1045-46.

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Feb. 8. Saturday.

Dined at the Presidents, with Mr. Lux, Messrs. Samuel and Robert Purveyance, Capt. Nicholson of the Maryland Frigate, Coll. Harrison, Wilson, Mr. Hall—upon New England Salt fish. The Weather was rainy, and the Streets the muddiest I ever saw. This is the dirtiest Place in the World—our Salem, and Portsmouth are neat in Comparison. The Inhabitants, however, are excusable because they had determined to pave the Streets before this War came on, since which they have laid the Project aside, as they are accessible to Men of War. This Place is not incorporated. It is neither a City, Town, nor Burrough, so that they can do nothing with Authority.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:258.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

1777 Feb. 8th

Motion for offering 6 per cent in the Loan Office.<sup>1</sup>

For it, was argued the necessity of money for carrying on the war, which four per cent had not yet procured: the expediency of borrowing on this interest to prevent farther emissions, & of alluring moneyed men to embark in our interest.

Against it, that the public, being the only borrower, must get the money at the interest already offered, if there was any to be lent, that those who withheld money, only did it in hopes our necessity would compel us to give a higher interest, & that they would withhold it as long as they had any prospect of forcing us to offer higher interest, that the interest would be a heavy & unequal burthen on the States, because those who now possess the money would lay the rest under a heavy tax under the name of interest: that there was little money to be borrowed, because men speculated, & found they could lay it out to better advantage, that the necessity for money made it more expedient to seek a more certain resource.

The Delegate of North Carolina could not be satisfied that Loan-Office certificates, & bills of credit, when both had the same security for their redemption, were not in effect the same thing: he therefore thought Loan certificates an other emission in bills of an other denomination, with this unjust inequality, that one part of the community would thereby be taxed to the others. He also thought that much money would not be borrowed on them at any interest, unless it was for the more convenient purposes of exchange, & he thought it would give our Enemies too convenient a machine for affecting our hopes & fears. He would vote against a Loan altogether if it were now the question, & the same reasons induced him to vote against the increase of interest. Question put, Aye 5, No 5. Aye—New Hampshire, M. Bay, N. Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia. No—Rhode-Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, So Carolina, Georgia.

Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> For Elbridge Gerry's motion to this effect, see *JCC*, 7:102-3. On February 26 Congress did raise the interest on loan office certificates to 6%. For further information on this issue, see the notes of debates by Burke, February 8, 25, 26, and by Benjamin Rush, February 10 and 26, 1777.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb'y 8th [1777]

An adjourment to Philadelphia was moved for and postponed.

A Resolve was moved for offering 6 per cent Interest in the Loan Office. The Debate took up greatest part of the Day, and the determination was postponed at the request of Connecticut.

The Arguments chiefly were that money was absolutely Necessary for Carrying on the War, that four per cent which was already offered could not procure it and it was therefore Necessary to Increase the Interest. That this mode was more eligible than a farther Emission because it would draw out of Circulation that Superfluous quantity which Occasioned the Rise of all prices. That the alluring monied men to embark in one Common Interest with the other orders of men would greatly add to the security of our Independence.

In answer it was urged that the Offering a higher Interest would not more certainly procure the money, for those who had it to lend would find no borrower but the public—and those who had not would not lend it on any Interest. That the Interest would be an Accumulating Debt (if it could be borrowed) under which the Country must Sink. That the States would be very unequally burthened because those who now possessed the greater part of the Money would lay the other States under a heavy Tax to them under the name of Interest. That [when] there were in the Country no money Lenders [every] Man found that every day's Occurrences [offered him] Opportunities of laying out his money to much greater advantage. That however Necessary the money might be it was still the more Necessary to fall on some Expedient that might procure it with certainty. That the Increase of Interest having been tried in many States without Effect very Clearly proved money was not to be borrowed.

North Carolina urged that it was a clear Truth that money was Necessary. It was equally clear that it was adviseable to prevent further Emissions, and to reduce the quantity in Circulation if it was possible to Effect it. The Delegate declared that when he offer'd his thoughts before that Illustrious assembly he did it with the greatest Diffidence and deference that he should not trouble them with any on so abstruse and Intricate a Subject as the present, but that he perceived the matter had not Struck any other in the same point of View that it did him. That he felt himself Oppressed with the Weight of the Question, and having the misfortune Singly to have the vote of one State to give he wished to do it on Established Principles, and the clearest Conviction. He therefore begged their Indulgence and candor if he should offer objections which had been answered in some former Debates (for there had been many on that Subject) which he had not the Good fortune to Hear. He urged that he had not been able to derive any Satisfactory Information from the Debate that the money could be had by way of Loan on any Interest, or that money raised by way of Loan would not be a further Emission in Effect. That he perceived that there were few or no money lenders in the Country, [. . .] that Farmers and Gentlemen speculated, and reserved their [money] for purchases, and Merchants, always relied on employing <sup>1</sup>

MS (NcU). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Remainder of MS missing.

## Abraham Clark to John Hart

Dr Sir,

Baltimore Feby 8. 1777

I lately heard the Assembly of New Jersey had met but cannot learn where, am therefore unable to give a proper direction. The four New England Colonies have had a meeting of Committees from their Legislatures to consult measures for their mutual defence & for regulating Trade & Commerce. Their proceedings are before Congress, and I expect will soon obtain their Approbation, and recommendation will thereupon be sent to N. York, N. Jersey, Pensa. & Maryland to appt. Comees. to meet at Phila. for the purpose of regulating the Price of all Articles of Trade &c. The Southern States will also be desired to meet for that purpose. Those matters if passed you will soon have notice of.

I am much alarmed with Genl. Washingtons Procla. of the 25th Janry. He hath assumed the Legislative & Executive Powers of Government in all the states. I moved Congress to pass a Resolution I produced for preventing its fatal Consequences and the establishing such a precedent. My motion was Comtd. and is now before the Come.<sup>1</sup> I hope our Legislature will take proper Notice of it, whatever issue it may have in Congress and not tamely Submit their Authority to the Controul of a power unknown in our Constitution. We set out to Oppose Tyranny in all its Strides, and I hope we shall persevere.

A Regulation for providing Carriages for the Army & to prevent as much as possible the Custom of impressing hath long been before Congress, Comtd. & recomtd. and so it remains.<sup>2</sup> I Wish you will not delay passing a Law for Regulating impresses of this kind. The Devastations of New Jersey by the Enemy will I think make it Necessary to prevent Cattle &c running at large, as fences on the main road are mostly destroyed and cannot soon be made and I think, no person ought to be compelled to fence agst. street Cattel at any Time. Mr. Sergeant talks of resigning and Mr. Stockton by his late procedure cannot Act,<sup>3</sup> I wish their places may be Supplied by such as will be reputable to New Jersey, not only by their integrity but Abilities.

The Tories in the two lower Counties of Maryland on the Eastern shore & Sussex on Delaware, are very troublesome and Collecting forces Aided by several Men of War in Delaware but more Especially in Chesapeake Bay. The Militia & two Continl Regiments are marching Against them.

I expect Congress will soon remove from hence to Lancaster, tho' it is not yet determined—if that should happen I shall be greatly perplexed



with the Chests. One Chief reason for removing is the Extravagant Price of Living here, the Poorest of board without any Liquor a Dollar a day, horsekeeping 3/6 or 4/, Wine 12/ a bottle, Rum 30/ per Gall. and everything else in proportion and likely soon to rise. I am Dr Sir, with great Regard to your House, Your Obedt. & Humble Servt.

Abra. Clark

P.S. The Price of living I only gave you as a piece of intelligence & not to Operate in our favour, as upon Recollection I feared you might look upon it as interested.

I pd. for bringing one Chest here £22, Mr Scudder & Patterson Consenting. At Writing thus far I hear you are sitting at Haddonsfield.

RC (NN). Addressed: "The Honourable John Hart Esqr., Speaker of the Assembly Now Sitting in Haddonsfield, New Jersey."

<sup>1</sup> Washington's proclamation called upon all Americans who had signed the declaration of fidelity to the king offered by the Howe brothers either to swear an oath of allegiance to the United States or to remove themselves and their families behind British lines within thirty days. Clark believed that this action violated a resolve passed by Congress on March 9, 1776, forbidding military officers to impose test oaths on civilians. Accordingly he and fellow New Jersey delegate Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant offered a motion criticizing Washington's proclamation, that Congress submitted to a special committee on February 6. Exactly three weeks later this committee brought in a report written by John Adams stating that "General Washington's proclamation does not interfere with the Laws or Civil Government of any State; but considering the situation of the Army was prudent and necessary." However, in order to avoid a potentially divisive debate on this issue, Congress then approved a recommendation by the committee to table its report. See *JCC*, 4:195, 7:95, 165-66; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:61-62; and Clark to Elias Dayton, March 7, 1777. Washington vigorously defended the issuance of his proclamation in a February 14 letter that may have been written to one of the New Jersey delegates. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:144.

<sup>2</sup> This committee, which had been appointed on January 11, submitted reports to Congress on January 22 and 30 as well as February 22. *JCC*, 7:30, 56-58, 75-78, 144-47.

<sup>3</sup> A reference to Stockton's behavior after his capture by the British in December 1776. See John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon, March 17, 1777.

## John Hancock to Ebenezer Hancock

Sir

Baltimore Feby 8th. 1777

Inclos'd you will find a Receipt sign'd by James Betton, William Gregg, Josiah Throop & Jeremiah Obrien for Three hundred thousand Dollars in Two Boxes, Mark'd EH, & committed to the Care of the above nam'd Gentlemen. This Money is for the purpose of paying the Bounties & Defraying the Expences of Raising the New Levies in the Eastern Departmt. & to be Subject to the Warrants of General Ward, to whom I have wrote on the Subject.<sup>1</sup> One hundred thousand Dollars are Sent to the State of

Connecticut, & One hundred thousand Dollars to the State of New Hampshire by this Oppory. for the same purposes.<sup>2</sup>

In one of your Boxes you will find a Bundle containg Thirty thousand Dollars directed for The Honl Thos Cushing Esqr. for the service of the Marine Department which you will Deliver to him, & take his Receipt therefor & transmit the same to me, as also your Receipt for the Three hundred thousand Dollars for publick service.

I wish you happy & am, Your Brother & hum set. J H Pt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "To Ebenezer Hancock Esqr., Depy Pay Mr Genl in the Eastern Department."

<sup>1</sup> Congress appropriated this money on January 10. *JCC*, 7:28. In his letter to Artemas Ward this day, Hancock repeated the substance of this paragraph and concluded with the instruction: "You will please to give the necessary orders for the payments of the Monies Sent to my Brother." PCC, item 12A.

<sup>2</sup> These funds were appropriated on January 18 and 20. *JCC*, 7:46, 50.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Assembly

Gentlemen

Baltimore Februy. 8th. 1777

I have been honour'd with your favrs. of Decemr. 30th & Januy. 13th which I laid before the Congress.<sup>1</sup> I hope before this the Honl Council have Rec'd my Letter of Januy 10th which they will find a full Answer to yours of 30th Decemr. brought by Mr Throop, to which I beg leave to Refer you, and therefore need not Add anything more on that Subject.

The Removal of Congress from Philada. and the consequent Stagnation of all Business for a season, has Occasion'd the Delay in forwardg. the money so much wanted in our State, however by this Oppory. Three hundred thousand Dollars is Sent to the Deputy Pay Master Genl. in Boston for the purpose of paying the Bounties & Defrayg. the Expences of Raising the New Levies in the *Eastern Departments*, subject to the Warrants of General Ward, to whom I write by this Oppory. One hundred thousand Dollars is also Sent to the State of Connecticut, & One hundred thousand Dollars to the State of New Hampshire for the same purposes.

I am exceeding sorry that we have not untill now been able to comply with your Requisition long since made for Money, in consequence of your Advances for the Service of the Continent, however I have the pleasure to inform you that Inclos'd you will find a Receipt sign'd by James Betton, William Gregg, Josiah Throop and Jeremiah Obrien for One hundred sixty six thousand six hundred & sixty six Dollars & two thirds contain'd in a Box Mark'd HGM committed to their care & to be Deliver'd to Henry Gardiner Esqr. Treasurer, to be Accounted for by the State of Massachus. Bay.<sup>2</sup> You have also Inclos'd Michael Hillegas the Continental Treasurer's order on Nathl Appleton Commissioner of the Loan office in Massachus. for One hundred & sixty six thousand six hundred & sixty

six Dollars & two thirds, which order is endors'd by your Delegates to Henry Gardiner Esqr. Treasr. both Sums amounting to Three hundred & thirty three thousand three hundred & thirty three Dollars & one third, being for Monies advanc'd by the State of Massachusetts for Continental purposes, for which the said State is to Account.<sup>2</sup>

I shall write you by Express, which will Reach you earlier than this, as the Waggon with the money will pass slowly on, that I shall not Add, but that I have the Honour to be with much Esteem & Respect, Gentlemen,  
Your most Obedt huml servt. John Hancock Presidt.

HGM

1 Box-9h-----	166,666 $\frac{2}{3}$
Michl. Hillegas order on Loan office-----	166,666 $\frac{2}{3}$
	<hr/> 333,333 $\frac{1}{3}$ Dolls.

RC (M-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> These letters are in PCC, item 65, 1:155-59, 179-81. The earlier letter is also in *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1501-3.

<sup>2</sup> This appropriation was made on November 22, 1776. *JCC*, 6:973.

<sup>3</sup> Congress appropriated this money on January 30. *JCC*, 7:75.

## John Hancock to the New Hampshire Assembly

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feby. 8th. 1777

By the Return of Mr Betton & Mr. Gregg you will Receive a Box Mark'd H containing One hundred thousand Dollars, an Advance to the State of New Hampshire for publick Service, and for which your State is to be Accountable.<sup>1</sup> This money would have been sooner sent, but the Removal of Congress from Philada. & the consequent Stoppage of all Business for a Season, has been the occasion of the Delay.

The Gentlemen who were some time ago Recommended as Field Officers for the Continental Battalion, are Approv'd, & by their Applying to General Washington will Receive their Commissions.

I have wrote you by four Expresses, but have not been honour'd with any Answer.

I am with Respect, Gentlemen, Your very Huml Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] I have Advanc'd Mr Betton Four hundred Dollars towards the Expences of Conveyg the Money, for which he is to Accott. with you, & you will please to Transmit the Settlemt.<sup>2</sup>

RC (Nh-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:50; and *N.H. State Papers*, 8:439-40, 487.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:105.

## John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 8th, 1777.

Inclos'd you find a Receipt sign'd by James Betton, Josiah Throop, Jeremiah Obrien, & William Gregg, for One hundred thousand Dollars contain'd in One Box Mark'd CO, to be deliver'd to John Lawrence Esqr. Treasurer at Hartford, this Sum being Transmitted you for the purpose of Recruiting the Continental Army in the State of Connecticutt, & for which yor State is to be Accountable.<sup>1</sup> You will therefore please to direct the necessary payments to forward the Recruiting Service.

I have been duly honour'd with your favr. of 12th ulto. inclosing the Transactions of the Committees of the four New Engld States which is now under the Consideration of Congress, as soon as they have come to a Determination the Result shall be Transmitted you.

I have forwarded to General Washington an extract of that part of your Letter which relates to the pay of the Light Horse from Connecticutt who serv'd last Campaign, with Directions to the General to Settle their pay & give orders for the payment.<sup>2</sup>

I have the honour to be with every Sentiment of Esteem, Sir, Your most Obedt Servt.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:46.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:98.

## Benjamin Rush to Robert Morris

Dear sir,

Baltimore Feby. 8th. 1777

I have the pleasure of informing you that your letter to Congress of the 4th instant <sup>1</sup> produced a Motion this day for adjourning to Philadelphia. After some debate it was resolved by a majority of *one* state only not to put the Question.<sup>2</sup> One state was accidentally unrepresented for a few minutes or it would have been carried in the Affirmative. The principal design of this letter is to request that you would urge the necessity of our returning to Philada. in your next letter. By our Absence from Philada. we not only depreciate the money there, but we likewise depreciate it by our residence here. The Scarcity of Artificers—the want of a sufficient number of boarding houses—the constant accession of Strangers who have business with the Congress and who create a fluctuation in the quantity of provisions brought into the town have rendered the price of living, and transacting business of all kinds three times as high in this



place as it is in many parts of the continent and nearly twice as high as in Philadelphia. But there are Other considerations which ought to influence us. Our return will have the same effect upon our politicks that General Washington's late successes have had upon our Arms. Its Operation perhaps may not be confined to the Continent. It may serve our cause even in the Court of France.

Your letter produced another Motion in Congress of greater consequence than the one just now mentioned, namely to raise the interest of money received into our loan offices to 6 per Cent. It produced a very long, and serious debate. The question was postponed 'till Monday next at the request of Connecticut. There is good reason to believe from the part the several states took in the debate that it will be carried in the Affirmative by a majority of two or three states. Col. R H Lee has changed his mind upon this Subject, and was one of the warmest Advocates for raising the interest upon the floor.

We live here in a convent. We converse only with One another. We are precluded from all opportunities of feeling the pulse of the public upon our measures. We rely upon the Committee of Philada. to feel it for us—and we expect once more to hear thro' you how it beats upon the Subject of returning to Philadelphia.

From Dr Sir your most humble Servt,

B. Rush

RC (CtY).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, this day.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

[February 8, 1777]

When I wrote this long letter I expected to have sent it off in a day or two after the date, but a variety of causes has prevented Mr. Bettens being dispatched sooner, so that I am now at the 8th Feby. & believe he will go off tomorrow. No intelligence from abroad 'tho anxiously Expected daily nor is there any thing new from the Army. The British Tyrants Speech I suppose has reach'd you before this by which you'll see he thinks it time to take care of his own safety 'tho he has assurances of amity from all the Courts in Europe. He also begins to think it an arduous task to enslave America, this I hope he will soon be more thoroughly convinc'd of.

WW

RC (MH-H). A continuation of William Whipple to Joseph Whipple, February 2, 1777. Endorsed by Joseph Whipple: "recd. March 7th."

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Feby. 9. Sunday.

Heard Mr. Allison. In the Evening walked to Fells Point, the Place where the Ships lie, a kind of Peninsula which runs out, into the Bason which lies before Baltimore Town. This Bason 30 Years ago was deep enough for large Tobacco ships, but since then has fill'd up, ten feet. Between the Town and the Point, We pass a Bridge over a little Brook which is the only Stream which runs into the Bason, and the only flux of Water which is to clear away the Dirt which flows into the Bason from the foul streets of the Town and the neighbouring Hills and Fields. There is a breast Work thrown up upon the Point, with a Number of Embrasures for Cannon facing the Entrance into the Harbour. The Virginia Frigate Capt. Nickolson, lies off in the Stream. There is a Number of Houses upon this Point. You have a fine View of the Town of Baltimore from this Point.

On my Return, I stopped and drank Tea at Captn. Smiths, a Gentleman of the new Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:258-59.

<sup>1</sup> William Smith, who was elected a delegate to Congress on February 15. *Ibid.*, p. 259n.

## John Hancock to Richard Henry Lee

Col Lee

Sunday 3 oClock PM, 9 Feby. [1777]

Judging it of importance that the Arm'd Vessell commanded by Capt Campbell, should be employ'd on the Service down the Bay, I have had a further Conference with the Owners. They have agreed she should go, provided if she be lost the Damage to them be Assertain'd by Capt Nickolson & myself, which they will abide by. I have Consented in behalf of the Marine Come. & have given Capt. Campbell orders. He is gone down to the Point to go out with the other Arm'd Vessel to Convoy the Troops, & perform the Service we order'd in the morng. Your Concurrence will oblige, Your huml set,

J Hancock

RC (ViU).

## John Hancock to Robert Treat Paine

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Sunday Feby. 9th. 1777

I am favour'd with yours from Boston of Januy. 12th & you have my

thanks for yor Remembrance of me and mine. I wrote you under Cover to Mr. Cushing, which hope you Rec'd.<sup>1</sup> By this oppor'y a Sum of Money is Sent to the Pay Master in Boston for the Recruiting Service, & to our State on Accott. of Advances for continental purposes 333,333 $\frac{1}{3}$  Dolls. & 30,000 Dolls. to Mr Cushing for the Marine Departmt. The Removal of Congress from Philada. & the consequent Stagnation of all Business for a Season occasion'd the Delay to this Time. By the Waggon that carries this Money I Send your Trunk, in the exact State I Rec'd it. I have committed it to the Care of four Gentn. who take Charge of the Money, & have directed it to the Care of Mr Cushing with orders to keep it untill he hears from you. Col. Whipple who has always been an *Active* Member on the Cannon Come. desires me to Tell you that you Carried off the important papers belonging to that Come. He was Apprehensive they were in this Trunk & wish'd me to open it, but I declin'd it.<sup>2</sup>

My Friend, if possible I am more busily Engag'd than ever, Mr. Morris remaining at Philada. makes me more Business on the Marine Come. We have this day (tho' Sunday) been engag'd in dispatching Arm'd Vessells with Transports of Troops to the Counties of Somerset & Worcester whose Inhabits. have Risen Arm'd in Opposition to our Cause, have Erected the King's Standard, & are supported by several of the King's Ships, but I trust I shall soon give you a good Accott. of this Expedition.<sup>3</sup> Mr John Adams & Mr Lovell have Arriv'd here, that we are now five strong.

Your information with respect to the Farmer is so far true, that he wrote his Brother to desist from taking the Continl. Money, but he is not gone over to the Enemy, I am told he has made fair weather with the Council of Safety at Philada. Stockton it is said, & truly, has Rec'd General How's protection. Mr Byers is now Employ'd, Magazines are Erecting in Brookfield & Carlile as also Elaboratories, Major Coren to have the Conduct of the one at Carlile, with a proper Artillery Company under his own Direction to be employ'd in the Various Branches. I inclose you two Letters directed to you which I open'd as knowing them on publick matters, I believe you will Excuse me. I took a Copy of a Letter on Cannon Business with a View to send it you, but as I am now so pinch'd for time cannot look it up, you shall have it in my next.

I wish you to write me often. Give a Letter to Mr Bant. he will forward. My little Wife & little Lydia with all Friends are well. My best Respects to yor Lady & all Enquiring Friends. & beleive me very truly,

Your Real Friend,

John Hancock

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Probably Hancock's January 13, 1777, letter to Paine.

<sup>2</sup> These cannon committee papers are now in the Paine Papers, MHi.

<sup>3</sup> See John Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety, February 7, 1777.

## Marine Committee to James Campbell and William Rogers

Sir (Circular) Baltimore February 9th 1777

You will Convoy the Transport Vessels with the Troops across the Bay to such place on the Eastern Shore as the Commander of the Troops shall direct. That being done you will proceed down the Bay, reconnoitre the enemies Ships, and use all possible dilligence to prevent their Tenders and Barges from getting supplies of any kind from the Shores, either of Maryland or Virginia. You will do good Service by giving notice of their danger to any inward bound Vessels coming up the Bay and fail not to take or destroy any of the enemies Tenders that may fall in your way. You are to Act in Friendly conjunction with the Land Troops and with the other armed Vessels that accompanys the Troops having always in veiw the great purpose of preventing the enemies ships to taking any thing off from the Land or giving any assistance to the Tories. You will inform this board of your proceedings by every opportunity.

We are sir, Your hble servants, J. Hancock Presdt.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "To Captain James Campbell of the schooner Enterprize. Captain William Rogers of the Sloop Montgomery."

## New Hampshire Delegates to Meshech Weare

Sir Baltimore 9th Feby 1777

Your favor of the 27th Decr. was handed us the 19th January by Mr. Betten.<sup>1</sup> We immediately apply'd for, and obtain'd, a grand [grant] for 100,000 Dollars, & have from that time, been using our utmost endeavour, to procure the money but the confused state of the Treasury, caused by the Removal from Philadelphia & the Pressing demands from all quarters, has prevented us from giving Mr. Betten the dispatch that we are sencible the Public service demands, But as Colonels Poor and Stark are gone home, with 12000 Dols which they receiv'd of the Pay Master for the recruiting service, we hope that important Business will not be delay'd for the arrival of this supply.

We had not the Pleasure of receiving your favor of 14th Decr. inclosing a Resolution of the 4th till a week after Mr. Betten arrived here, & as the Business therein directed had been Previously done, we did not lay the Requisition before Congress.<sup>2</sup>

The list of the Field officers for the Regiment which has been stationed at Portsmouth did not arrive 'till after the General was vested with his



new Powers, their names were therefore transmitted to him & he will deliver the Commissions.<sup>2</sup>

The seeming advantages gained by the Enemy in New Jersey, will Eventually be serviceable to the United States. The cruel Ravages committed in that Country by the British Troops, has raised such a Spirit of resentment in the Inhabitants that the Militia who could not be prevailed on before to lend their assistance to defend their own Country now turn out with great Spirit, & have already done very essential service. On the whole, from present appearances, Our Army will end the Winter Campaign with Eclat.

We are in Daily expectation of very Important Intelligence from Europe, But no disposition of the European Powers Ought to cause the least relaxation in our measures. We therefore hope every Exertion will be used to raise, and Equip, the new army. When that is compleated, America will be on a Respectable footing, we then may look Bold on every Power in Europe, & shall be in a good Situation to form what Alliances we Please.

We observe by a Vote of the Genl. Assembly which you have favor'd us with a Copy of, that we are again Honour'd with their choice to represent the State in Congress.<sup>3</sup> We beg leave through you, sir, to return our most sincere Thanks, for this instance of their Confidence, & can only say that we shall exert our utmost Abilities to deserve it. As a close application to Business without a due proportion of Exercise has a tendency to unnervate both Body & mind, we hope provision will be made to give us a Respite in the Spring, we wish to have leave to return home the beginning of May.

Mr Betten will be able to give you a much better acct. of the Army than we can as their Situation may be considerably altered between the time we last heard from them, & the time he passes them. We therefore beg leave to refer you to that Gentleman. We are, Sir, with real Esteem & Regard. Your Most Obt Serts,

Wm Whipple

Matthew Thornton

RC (James S. Copley Library, La Jolla, Calif.) - Written by Whipple and signed by Whipple and Thornton.

<sup>2</sup> See William Whipple to John Langdon, January 21, 1777, note 1.

<sup>3</sup> This is probably the letter of Weare to the New Hampshire delegates printed under the date December 16, 1776, in *N.H. State Papers*, 8:426. The enclosed December 4, 1776, resolve was "to Desire the Honble Congress to transmit to the State 20,000 Dollars to provide Cloathing &c for the army." *Ibid.*, p. 404.

<sup>4</sup> See Hancock to the New Hampshire Assembly, February 8, 1777, note 1.

<sup>5</sup> On December 23, 1776, the New Hampshire Assembly reappointed Josiah Bartlett, Matthew Thornton, and William Whipple as delegates to Congress and provided "that any one of them in the absence of the others have full power to represent this State, and that no more than two of them attend at one time." *N.H. State Papers*, 8:437.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feby. 10. 1777

Yesterday, I took a long Walk with our Secretary Mr. Thompson to a Place called Fells Point, a remarkable Piece of Ground about a mile from the Town of Baltimore. It is a Kind of Peninsula which runs out into the Harbour, and forms a Bason before the Town. This Bason, within thirty Years, was deep enough for large Tobacco ships to ride in, but since that Time has filled up ten Feet, so that none but small light Vessells can now come in. Between the Town and the Point We pass a Bridge over a small run of Water which empties itself into the Bason, and is the only Stream which runs into it and is quite insufficient to float away the Earth which every year runs into the Bason from the dirty streets of the Town and the neighbouring Hills and fields.

There are four Men of War just entered Chesapeake Bay, which makes it difficult for Vessels to go out, and indeed has occasioned an Embargo to be laid here for the present. Your Uncle <sup>1</sup> has two Vessells here, both detained—one is now employed as a Transport for a little While. These Men of War will disappoint you of your Barrell of flour. Your Uncle's Vessells would sell very well here. Hardens would fetch 800 Pounds of this Money.<sup>2</sup>

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:157–58.

<sup>1</sup> Abigail's uncle, Isaac Smith, Sr., was a Boston merchant. At least one of his ships left Baltimore the next month for Boston. Adams to Abigail Adams, March 7, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> John wrote a second letter to Abigail this day, enlarging on his description of Baltimore, commenting on Elizabeth Smith's coming wedding to Rev. John Shaw, and concluding with a comment on his resignation as chief justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court of Judicature. "I have this Day sent my Resignation of a certain mighty office. It has relieved me from a Burden, which has a long Time oppress'd me. But I am determin'd, that while I am ruining my Constitution of Mind and Body, and running daily Risques of my Life and Fortune in Defence of the Independency of my Country, I will not knowingly resign my own." Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:158–59.

## John Adams to the Massachusetts Council

May it please your Honours

Baltimore Feby. 10. 1777

I find myself under a Necessity of resigning my Appointment to a Seat in the Superiour Court;<sup>1</sup> and I do accordingly hereby resign it, and request that Some other Gentleman may be forthwith appointed to that most honourable and important Station.<sup>2</sup> I am your Honours most obliged and obedient humble Servant,

John Adams

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Adams was often troubled by his inability to assume the office of chief justice of the Superior Court of Judicature after his appointment on October 11, 1775. Moreover, he soon came under fire for multiple office-holding, and in his autobiography claimed that "I expected to go no more to Congress, but to take my Seat on the Bench." Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 3:359. Adams was extremely sensitive to the charge of multiple office-holding because of his sharp criticism of the political pluralism of the Hutchinsons and Olivers in pre-war Massachusetts, and he had already resigned his position on the Massachusetts Council. See Adams' letters to James Otis, Sr., April 29, and to James Warren, May 12, 1776; and Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 3:359-63.

<sup>2</sup> Adams sent this resignation under cover of a letter to John Avery, the council's deputy secretary, explaining that he was taking this action because "it is of great importance to the public, that the Superior Court Should be filled up, and proceed to the Business of the State and . . . it has been already kept, too long unfilled."

He continued with news of efforts to recruit a larger army: "I have the Pleasure to assure you that We have the most agreeable Intelligence from Virginia of the Spirit and Success, with which the Levies for the new Army go on, our accounts are also agreeable from the other States. Part of Several Regiments are arrived here, on their March from Virginia to New Jersey. We wish and hope Soon to hear that the New England States have completed their Quotas." The Adams Papers, MHi.

See also Adams to John Avery, Jr., March 21, 1777.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 10th. 1777

You will receive herewith a letter from Genl. Washington & a Packet with Muster Rolls from Genl. Schuylers Secy. It seems by Genl. Howe's letter as if he did not give up the Idea of Trying Genl. Lee by a Court Martial! Pray wou'd it not be well done for a Committee of the Lawyers in Congress to examine the Laws or Articles of War &c to see how far such a Conduct can be justified or Condemned & their report on that point might hereafter be sent to Genl. Howe or published as may be thought best.<sup>1</sup> We have the pleasure to inform you that another Ship with a Cargo of Salt is arrived in this River & the former one got safe up, so that the Public & Individuals will be greatly releived in their wants of this Article. This last Ship is from Nantes but the letters are not yet come up from her, soon as they do, if there is any interesting intelligence it shall be transmitted to you. The Randolph Frigate & ships under her Convoy got safe out to Sea last Thursday. The Frigate sails well & is not badly manned. The Money here is expended, the Want of that Article resounds from every Quarter. Mr. Trumbull Pay M[aste]r in the No. Department writes Mr. Clymer in these Terms. "We are in the utmost Distress for want having none but what little can be borrowed. The Commy is entirely out, the Qr. Mr. also."



We have the Honor to be, Your most obedt hum Servants,  
 Robt Morris  
 Geo Clymer

P.S. The Ship from Nantes has brought no other dispatches than a letter to Doctr Franklin sent to the Secret Committee, & a London News paper with a letter from thence to Col Lee that will be forwarded by Mr. Bradford.<sup>2</sup>

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> On this point, see Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 20, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> This day the Executive Committee also wrote the following note to Philadelphia wagon master Robert Erwin: "Be pleased to pay the within Accot. amounting to Twenty seven pounds, seven shillings and three pence." RC privately owned, 1975. On the back of this note is an account for the payment of £27.7.3, "To the Team in the Continental Service carrying a load of British Prisoners from Philada to Fredericks Town (Maryland)" in July 1776.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

Feby. 10. [1777]

On motion to raise the interest of money to 6 per cent for loan office tickets,<sup>1</sup> it was said in the negative—

1 That there was no other way of laying out money.

2 That loan office tickets are the same as money, and therefore in case of the want of money new emissions are equally proper.

In the affirmative it was said by Mr Sergeant, That loan office tickets would be confined only to one State.

By Mr. Jas. Wilson, That Bonds, lands &c. were transferrable as well as loan office tickets, and therefore the argument of their being the same as money is without force. That the money lenders had all their money paid in to them, that 3 millions had been received by the usurers in Pennsylvania all of which was probably in thier hands, and that if the interest was raised to 6 per cent it wd. procure money.

Mr John Adams. That loan offices tickets would not circulate because they bore an interest. That Massachusetts Bay in the last war emitted 50,000 in notes bearing an interest of 6 per cent which were immediately locked up and withdrawn from the circulation even tho' gold & silver was plentiful among them. That new emissions would only encrease the difficulty, that the continent would bear only 7 millions. That Unless the interest was raised, the money holder would employ his money in speculation in buying lands, and in monopolising goods, by which means the necessaries of life were enhanced in thier price. That this alone would regulate the price of goods, that no other wisdom [. . .]<sup>2</sup> emission he would



rather see our army disbanded, and Howe let loose to ravage the whole country.

Upon calling the question The States (10 in number divided equally). As a proof of the impropriety of each state having a separate Vote, it is remarkable that there were 18 members for raising the interest & 10 only against it. The States that voted in favor of it were New-Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia. The inhabitants of these states collectively make near two thirds of the whole inhabitants of the united States.

〈*On the question*〉 Mr. John Adams [. . .]<sup>2</sup> political character in the same light as they do a suit of cloaths. They put it on & Off at pleasure. But we trifle with all morality—we trifle with the happiness of millions, by not holding up to [. . .]<sup>3</sup>

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

<sup>1</sup> This motion was made on February 8, but the debate was resumed on the 10th. See *JCC*, 7:102–3.

<sup>2</sup> MS damaged, two lines missing.

<sup>3</sup> At this point in Rush's notebook a leaf has been torn out leaving only a narrow strip of his notes at the left hand margin. On the second line on the verso of this mutilated leaf appear the numerals "11, 1777," which suggest that Rush began making an entry for the debates of February 11. Despite Burnett's conjecture that "most of the destroyed entry was, therefore, probably under date of Feb. 11," it seems more likely that the 19 lines that can be seen at the margin pertain to February 10 and that only a line or two was written on the 11th. See Burnett, *Letters*, 2:245.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Baltimore Feb 11. 1777

I beg Leave to inclose my Account of Expences from the 26th of April 1775 to the 27th of August 1776 amounting to <sup>1</sup>

I intended to have laid it before the House of Representatives when I was last in New England, but the sudden Adjournment of the General Assembly in September, & my Hurry in preparing for my Journey hither after its sitting again in October, prevented my attending to it.

When I sat off from Lexington after the memorable Battle there, I had with me only the Cloaths upon my Back, which were very much worn; those which I had provided for myself being in Boston, and it was out of my Power then to recover them. I was therefore laid under a Necessity, in order to appear in any kind of Decency, of being at an extraordinary Expence for Cloathing and Linnen after my Arrival in Philadelphia, which I think makes a reasonable Charge of Barrils, Leonards and Stills Bills in my Account.

It may perhaps be necessary to say something of the Charge of Horse hire in the last Article. When I left Watertown in September 75, two

Horses were delivered to me out of the publick Stable by order of the Honbl Council, for my self and my servant. They were very poor when I took them, and both tired on the Road as you will observe by my Account. One of them afterwards died in Philadelphia, which obligd me to purchase another in that City; and with this Horse I returnd to Boston the last Fall. His being my own Property, having purchasd him without Charge to my Constituents, I think gives me a Right to make a Charge of horse hire, which is left to be carried out in a Sum which shall be thought just and reasonable. Mr A tells me he is obligd to pay seven pounds 10/ for the Hire of each of his Horses to Philadelphia. The other horse I left at Boston (being worn out) to be disposd of as should be judgd proper.

I shall take it as a Favor if you will present the Account to the Honbl House, and acquaint the Committee to whom it may be referrd, with the Reasons of the Charges above mentiond; and make any other Explanations which you may judge necessary. Mrs A has the Vouchers, to whom I beg of you to apply for them in Person, before you present the Account. I wish it may be settled as soon as the House can conveniently attend to it. If an Allowance for my Services is considerd at the same Time, which I have a particular Reason to wish may be done, you will please to be informd, that I sat off from Lexington or Worcester, on the 26th of April 75 and returnd to Watertown on the 14th of August following. And again I sat off from Watertown on the first of September 75 and returnd to Boston on the 27th of August 76.

I have troubled you with this Epistle of Horse hire & Shop Goods, at a Time when, no doubt, your Attention is called to Affairs of the greatest Concern to our Country. Excuse me, my dear Friend, for once, and be assured that I am your affectionate,<sup>2</sup>

S A

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup>Blank in MS. The Massachusetts General Court on May 3, 1777, ordered payment of £288.15.8 to Adams "in full satisfaction of his service expenses as a delegate of the Continental Congress from April 1775 to August 27, 1776." Massachusetts Council Minutes, DLC(ESR). A transcript of Adams' 16-page account is in the Peter Force Papers, DLC.

<sup>2</sup>Adams did not send this letter until March 25 "for want of such Conveyance as I wishd for." See Samuel Adams to James Warren, March 25, 1777.

## Executive Committee to Lord Howe

My Lord

February 11th. 1777

Lieutenant Wm. Jones late Master and Commander of his Britannick Majestys Sloop Race Horse will deliver this letter as we have permitted him on Parole to wait on your Lordship for the purpose of negotiating an Exchange between himself & Capt. Wm Hallock late of the Brigant-

tine Lexington belonging to the United States of America; who was taken Prisoner by the Pearle Frigate and admitted to return here under Parole by Captain Hammond of the Roebuck. We have also allowed Captain Jones Surgeon and Boy to attend him and if your Lordship approves of this Exchange, Capt Hallocks Parole or a dismission from it with any two of the Lexingtons officers or people that were taken with him may be sent to General Washington or to this office when Captain Jones Parole shall be returned, and as Captain Hammond detained one of the Lexingtons officers on board the Roebuck, we hope he may be informed as soon as possible of this transaction. If this exchange is refused we expect Capt Jones, his Surgeon and Boy to be returned immediately.<sup>1</sup>

It will ever give us pleasure to promote an intercourse of good offices to the Unfortunate during the Continuance of this unhappy war and with sentiments of respect. We have the Honor to be yr. LdShips Most obt Servts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup>For further information about the case of Lieutenant Jones, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:596, 614–15, 1109.

## Georgia Delegates to John Stirk

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Baltimore Feby 11th 1777

Your favour by Mr. Jos. Pearson of the 5th of Jany we have Recd. & Immediately made Application, for the Amount of your Draught, & agreeable to yr. Desire have Delivered to him to bring forward to You the sum of ten Thousand Dollars. At the Time of Receiving your Letter, the Money could not be Obtained, there not being a sufficiency in the Treasury to Supply the Numerous large Demands, then in Waiting. Of Course we was Obliged to Detain him, till this Time. Due Consideration therefore ought to be had, to the Necessary Expense & Time of his Detention. We hope he will Come Safe with his Charge, & will Deliver either to You or if agreeable to Your Order, to George Walton Esqr. who, we understand, has been very Friendly, in promoting the Recruiting Service & Merits our gratefull Acknowledgements.

A Supply of Guns, Blankets &c cannot at this Time be Obtained from this Quarter; must therefore Recommend to you, to Obtain such supplies as You can get, where you are & as Soon as possible March to the Georgia state.

We are sorry to Inform You that Complaints have been made to us Repeatedly, that some Officers under yr. Command, behaved Imprudently, before your Arrival in Virginia, but have not the least Doubt, but that under Discreet Management, every Imputation of that kind will be

prevented for the Future. We Sincerely Wish you Success & Hope your Spirited Exertions will fully answer the flattering Expectations of all your Friends, & are Sr., Your most Obedt Servts,

Lyman Hall

Nathan Brownson

10,000 Dollars

P.S. Yr. & Majr. Cuthberts Joint Order was Accepted & pd. to the Virgina. Delegates for the Sum £5000. Cu[rrenc]y of Virginia.

RC (NNPM). Written by Brownson and signed by Brownson and Hall.

<sup>1</sup>Lt. Col. John Stirk of the Second Georgia Battalion was recruiting men for his regiment in Virginia. See Col. Samuel Elbert's October 2, 1776, orders to him and Maj. Seth John Cuthbert in *Collections of the Georgia Historical Society* 5, pt. 2 (1902): 6-7.

## John Hancock to James Betton, William Gregg, Jeremiah O'Brien, and Josiah Thrope

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feby 11th. 1777

You having taken the charge of a waggon with money, you will proceed therewith agreeable to the following Instructions.

Make the best dispatch to the city of Philadelphia, and on your arrival there apply to the Honble. Robert Morris Esq. one of the Committee of Congress, and desire him to order you a suitable waggon with four horses. When that is effected, unload the waggon you take from hence, and send it immediately back to this place, and when you have loaded the money in the other waggon, you will proceed on untill you arrive at Fish-Kill. You are there to deliver the money design'd for Albany to the Honble. Convention of New-York or the commanding officer, & request them to forward it as directed to the pay-master at Albany.<sup>1</sup> From Fish-Kill you will proceed on to Hartford & deliver one box of money mark'd C.O. to the Honble. John Lawrence Esqr. Treasurer, & deliver him my letter directed to Governor Trumbull.<sup>2</sup> From thence you will go on to Boston in Massachusetts-Bay and deliver to Henry Gardner Esqr. one box mark'd HGM & two boxes EH to Ebenezer Hancock Esqr. depy. pay-master general.<sup>3</sup> From thence proceed to New-Hampshire & deliver to the Treasurer one box mark'd H.<sup>4</sup> You will please to make the greatest dispatch in your power & take particular care that the waggon is constantly guarded, & be very attentive to the money in the night, you will deliver your letters safe to the persons to whom they are address'd.

I have put in the waggon a small trunk directed to R.T. Paine, which you will please to deliver to Thos. Cushing Esqr. at Boston.



Shou'd you want any assistance on the road, apply to any persons, & shew them the orders delivered you herewith, and they will afford you aid.

Be as frugal of expences as possible, I have given you four hundred dollars, with which you are to pay the expences of all the gentlemen who attend the waggon, you are also to pay the expences of the driver & horses. So soon as you have delivered the money at New-Hampshire you will discharge the waggon with orders to return immediately, & transmit to me the time of its discharge. You are to account with the Assembly of New-Hampshire for your expences who will settle with you, & desire them to send me the account.

I wish you a good Journey & am, Gent., your humble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

[P.S.] You will Settle with Mr Obrien for his Detention in the same proportion as the State of New Hampshire adjusts the Rate of your Detention, he was detain'd thirteen Days.

RC (Nh-Ar). In a clerical hand, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:75.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:46.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 6:973, 7:75.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:50.

## John Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen

Baltimore Febr'y. 11th. 1777

I have it in Charge from Congress to Request that the State of Maryland may be fully and constantly Represented in Congress;<sup>1</sup> the Necessity of every State being fully Represented to Add weight to the Councils of America, as well as to keep up that Union and good Correspondence so essential to our Country, will naturally Suggest the propriety of this Application, which I have no doubt you will immediately comply with, more especially as Business of the utmost moment is before Congress.

The Inclos'd Resolve recommending to you to prevent the Sailing of all Provision Vessells, I Beg leave to Refer to your immediate Attention, as it is of importance to prevent as much as possible Supplies falling into the possession of the Enemy.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be with Esteem, Gentlemen, Your most obedt. Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> See Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:105; and *Md. Archives*, 16:133.

## John Hancock to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore 11t Feby 1777

The Bearer of this Mr. Dickinson is the Owner of the Waggon supplied Capt Casdrop for the purpose of transporting the Money order'd to you by Congress, his Waggon was Return'd, & to this Day no Notice is taken of him, or any directions rec'd as to the Discharge of the hire. I Beg to Call yor Attention to him, and that you will please to order him paymt.<sup>1</sup> I now have his Waggon in Employ, but it was difficult to obtain it as the paymt. for the former hire was not made, these Delays prejudice the Service, & surely Capt Casdrop ought to have seen the Waggon properly Discharg'd.

I am with Respect, Gentn., Your most hum set,

John Hancock

RC (PHi photostat).

<sup>1</sup>On February 17 the council of safety ordered Brittingham Dickinson to be paid "£23.17.6 for Waggon hire, for bringing up Cash from Baltimore." *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:125.

## Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence

Gentn.

Philada. Feby 11th. 1777

In compliance with your letter of the 3d Inst I dispatched that express to Boston with the Sundry letters for France Marked No. 1 and with them I sent the News Papers down to the day the Express set out. The Packets No. 2 I detained here & shall send them by the first Vessell. My reason for doing this was because I think they will leave this long before the others can get to Boston.

A Ship is just arrived from Nantes with Salt, the latest letters by her are dated the 16 Novr., at least those are the latest I have seen or heard of, there is none from Mr Deane, and Doctr Franklin cou'd not possibly be arrived at that date. The Sloop Independance is nearly loaden. I thought of sending her for Nantes but reflecting that Supplis must certainly have been sent out to Martinico I begin to think it may Answer better to Send her thither as she will sooner be back. Of this I will Consider & Act for the best, but if in the mean time I receive any orders they shall be punctually obeyed. You had best send up dispatches to go by her both for Mr Bingham & for Paris. By a Brig from Martinico Mr Bingham sent the enclosed papers but no letter for the Committee. The

Captn of the Brig a French Man told me that in Consequence of the Admiral at Jam[aic]a refusing to deliver up some French Vessells they had seized, the Genl at Martinico sent out a Frigate which took an English Brig of 14 Guns & brought her in, but before I give entire Credit to this I must see it under Mr Bingham's hand.<sup>1</sup> Mr Bradford of Boston writes me that a Gentn there has recd. Answers to letters he wrote by our Packet the Success, Capt Cleveland, in which Mr Merkle went passenger so that Vessell must be arrived. I am very respectfully, Gentn,  
Your Obedt Servt, Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137).

<sup>1</sup> This is probably an exaggerated account of the seizure and condemnation of the French brigantine *Le Guillaume*. In reply to strong French protests, British Admiral James Young replied that he could not order the return of the vessel, but he subsequently issued orders and public notices prohibiting the cruising of English privateers without royal commissions. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1088-92, 1138-41, 1182-84, and 1270-71.

## Robert Morris to Richard Henry Lee

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 11th. 1777

I received your favour of the 3d Inst and shou'd very gladly have carried your plan of sending some Cruizers of the Capes of Virginia into execution but really we have none in a Condition to send as you will see by the Account I have given to the Marine Committee. The Vessells its true will soon be ready, but its the devil to get Men.

I ordered the Wasp round from Chester to you at Baltimore. Baldwyn who has the Command of her is an Active smart Fellow. Fit him out directly & let him try to get past the Enemy's Ships, he will perform that service well. I suppose the Lexington is now blocked up. The Vessells from hence shall be sent away fast as possible. I am, Dr sir, Your Obedt Servant,  
Robt Morris

RC (ViU).

## Benjamin Rush to Robert Morris

Dear sir,

Baltimore Feby. 11. 1777

I am sorry to inform you that, from the accidental Absence of one state, and the tergiversation of another, the Congress divided upon the important question of raising the interest upon loan office tickets to 6 per Cent. We are all in confusion. Nothing can save us but a reconsideration of that Question. It is rumoured here that you do not intend to serve in

Congress in consequence of your late Appointment.<sup>1</sup> For God's sake do not desert them! The post is just on the wing.

Yours,

B Rush

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> The rumor was without foundation; Morris had affirmed his intention to serve almost immediately after his reelection on February 5. The minutes of the Pennsylvania Assembly contain the following entry for February 6. "A letter from Robert Morris, Esq., addressed to the Speaker, declaring, that 'although' his 'private business suffers exceedingly by giving up' his 'time and attention to the public. Yet as' he 'means to serve' his 'country to the extent of his abilities in the present struggle for liberty, the Honourable House of Assembly may depend on' his 'exertions in the station they have thought proper to assign him,' was read." *Journals and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: John Dunlap, 1777), p. 22.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feb. 12. 1777

The Certificates and Cheque Books for the Loan office, I hope and presume, are arrived in Boston, before this Time, and notwithstanding the discouraging accounts which were given me, when I was there, I still hope that a considerable sum of money will be obtained by their Means.

It is my private opinion, however, that the Interest of four per Cent is not an equitable Allowance. I mean, that four per Cent, is not so much as the use of the money is honestly worth, in the ordinary Course of Business, upon an Average, for a year—and I have accordingly exerted all the little faculties I had, in endeavouring on Monday last, to raise the Interest to six per Cent.<sup>1</sup> But after two days debate, the Question was lost by an equal Division of the States present, five against five. New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, New Jersey, Pensilvania and Virginia on one side, and Rhode Island, Connecticut, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia, on the other. Here was an Example of the Inconvenience and Injustice of voting by States. Nine Gentlemen, representing about Eight hundred thousand People, against Eighteen Gentlemen representing a Million and an half nearly, determined this Point. Yet We must not be Startled at this.

I think it my duty to mention this to you, because it must be astonishing to most People in our State, that the Interest is so low. I know they are at a Loss to account for it upon any Principles of Equity, or Policy, and consequently may be disposed to blame their Delegates, but you may depend upon it, they are not in fault.

I tremble for the Consequences of this Determination. If the Loan offices should not procure us Money, We must emit more, which will depreciate all which is already abroad; and so raise the Prices of Provisions and all the Necessaries of Life, that the additional Expence to the Conti-



ment, for supplying their Army and Navy, will be vastly more than the two per Cent in dispute. Besides all the Injustice, Chicanery, Extortion, oppression, and Discontent, which is allways occasioned every where by a depreciating Medium of Trade, I am much afraid of another Mischief. I fear that for want of Wisdom to raise the Interest in Season, We shall be necessitated within a few Months to give Eight or Ten Per Cent, and not obtain the Money We want after all.

I have been so often a Witness of the Miseries of this after Wisdom, that I am wearied to death of it.

Had a Bounty of Twenty dollars a Man been offered Soldiers last Time, it would have procurd more than the enormous Bounties that are now offered will procure. Had Government been assumed in the States Twelve Months sooner than it was it might have been assumed with Spirit, Vigour and Decision, and would have obtained an habitual Authority, before the critical Time came on when the Strongest Nerves of Government are necessary. Whereas now, every new Government is as weak as water and as brittle as Glass.

Had we agreed upon a Non Exportation, to commence when the Non importation commenced, what an immense Sum Should We have Saved? Nay very probably We Should have occasioned a very different House of Commons to be chosen, the Ministry to have been changed and this War avoided. Thus it is. You who will make no ill use of these observations may read them, but the Times are too delicate and critical to indulge freely in such speculations. It is best I believe that no mention Should be made, that the Rate of Interest has been again debated, lest Some Saving Men Should withhold their Money, in hopes of compelling the Public to raise the Interest. If the Interest Should never be raised, those who lend in our State, will fare as well as others: if it Should, the Interest of all will be raised, that which is borrowed now, as well as that which shall be borrowed hereafter. I Sincerely wish that our People would lend their Money, freely. They will repent of it, if they do not. We shall be compelled to emit Such Quantities, that every Man except a few Villains will loose more by Depreciation, than the two Per Cent. Not to mention again the Scene of Anarchy and Horror, that a Continuation of Emissions will infallibly bring upon Us.

The Design of Loan offices, was to prevent the further Depreciation of the Bills, by avoiding further Emissions. We might have emitted more Bills promising an Interest but if those had been made a legal Tender, like the other Bills, and consequently mixed in the Circulations with them, they would instantly have depreciated all the other Bills four Per Cent, if the Interest was four, and more than that too, by increasing the Quantity of circulating Cash. In order to prevent these Certificates from Circulation and consequently from depreciating the Bills, We Should give them Such Attributes as will induce Men of Fortune and others, who usually lend Money, to hoard them up. The Persons who usually lend Money

are 1. Men of Fortune, who live upon their Income, and these generally chose to have a Surplusage to lay up every year, to increase their Capitals. 2. Opulent Merchants, who have more Money than they choose to risque, or can conveniently employ in Trade. 3. Widows, whose Dower is often converted into Money, and placed out at Interest, that they may receive an annual Income to live upon, without the Care and Skill which is necessary to employ Money advantageously in Business. 4. Orphans, whose Guardians seldom incline to hazard the Property of their Wards in Business. 5. A few Divines, Phisicians, and Lawyers, who are able to lay by a little of their annual Earnings. 6. Here and there a Farmer and a Tradesman, who is forehanded and frugal enough to make more Money than he has occasion to spend. Add to these 7. Schools, Colledges, Towns, Parishes and other Societies, which Sometimes let Money. All these Persons are much attached to their Interest and so anxious to make the most of it that they compute and calculate it, even to farthings and single days.

These Persons can get Six Per Cent, generally, of private Borrowers, on good security of Mortgages or Sureties.

Now, is it reasonable in the State to expect that monied Men will lend to the Public at a less Interest, than they can get from private Persons? I answer yes, when the Safety of the State is not in doubt: and when the Medium of Exchange has a stable value, because larger Sums may be put together, and there is less trouble in collecting and receiving the Interest and the Security is better. But the Case is otherwise, when Men are doubtfull of the Existence of the State, and it is worse still, when they see a Prospect of Depreciation in the Medium of Trade. All Governments in Distress are obliged to give an higher Interest for Money, than when they are prosperous.

The Interest of Money, always bears Some Proportion to the Profits of Trade. When the Commerce of a Country is Small, in few Hands, and very profitable, the Interest of Money is very high. Charles the fifth was necessitated to give twenty four Per Cent, after wards it fell in Europe to Twelve, and since to six, Five, Four, and Three.

I think I never Shall consent to go higher than Six Per Cent, as much as I am an Advocate for raising it to that, and in this I have been constant for full Nine Months. The Burthen of Six per Cent upon the Community will very soon be heavy enough. We must fall upon some other Methods of ascertaining the Capitals We borrow. A depreciating Currency, We must not have. It will ruin Us. The Medium of Trade ought to be as unchangeable as Truth: as immutable as Morality. The least Variation in its Value, does Injustice to Multitudes, and in proportion it injures the Morals of the People, a Point of the last Importance in a Republican Government.<sup>2</sup>

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Congress did raise the interest rate to six percent on February 26. *JCC*, 7:158.

See also Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates, February 10<sup>th</sup>, 1777.

<sup>a</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Adams to Warren, March 15, 1777.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb'y 12th [1777]

Maryland & Pennsylvania were very solicitous to procure a vote of Congress approving a Meeting lately held by Committees appointed by the four New England Governments, to the end that this approbation might imply a right to disapprove. It occasioned very long & interesting debates. At length the general opinion was that Congress had necessarily a right to inquire into the cause of any meeting, & to require to know what was transacted at any such meetings, & also to require an explanation of any thing that was dubious, & satisfaction for anything that was alarming to the whole, or any one of the States; that this right necessarily existed in their power to take care each for his respective State, that no injury happened to her from without. But that Congress had no right to prohibit meetings, or censure them if the transactions in them were not injurious to others. The Delegate of North Carolina refused to say what his State could not do, declaring he thought she could do every thing which she had not precluded herself from by plain & express declaration: to yield up any of her rights was not in his power, & very far from his inclination. That by the Law of Nations she had a right to demand a satisfactory account & explanation of any transactions of one or more States, & she had appointed him to watch lest any injury should come to her from without. In this he would use his best endeavours. The Question put, the approbation was denied, many voting against it lest its ambiguity should create further disputes: of this number was North Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See also John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., January 30, 1777, note.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb. 12th to 19th. 1777

Several days of this week are consumed in debates on the appointment of General Officers. The debates were perplexed, inconclusive, & irksome. The Delegates of several States were desirous of fixing a rule of promotion, & several were offered & rejected. Maryland, Virginia, & North Carolina desired that each State should recommend Officers in proportion to the men they furnish: three Battalions, one Brigadier; nine, one Major General. This was rejected. It was then proposed to promote General



Officers as they stood in rank, & rejected. To all the rule a saving was added, that the Congress might deviate from any, in favor of merit eminently distinguished & generally acknowledged.

North Carolina argued that some rule should be observed, & entered on the Journals. That the Congress would be an object of very jealous apprehension, unchecked & unlimited as it is, if the officers of the army held their honor at the precarious pleasure of a majority. Officers hold their honor the most dear of any thing. Setting them aside when they were entitled to promotion would wound that honor very sorely. Their attention would therefore be entirely to that authority which had so much power to wound it, or to cherish it. This policy was always observed by Monarchs, & the end was to keep the Army dependant on them: but such policy was unbecoming in Congress, who ought to give no room for jealousy. The rule of succession is most familiar to officers & therefore most agreeable to them: but the proportion would give greatest satisfaction to the States, & the satisfying them was of greatest importance, & ought to be adopted.

At length it was proposed to resolve, that regard be had to the rank, to the quota, & to merit. It was agreed to, but no notice was taken of it in the nomination or appointments. N. Carolina did not vote for Major Generals; because the Delegate found, no rule was observed, & he knew nothing of the merit of any Officers in nomination, & did not choose to give a vote in Congress, for which he could give no reason.<sup>1</sup>

Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:133; and John Hancock to Certain Continental Officers, February 22, 1777.

## Committee of Congress to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir,

Baltimore 12th Feb 1777

The Committee on the Affairs in the Northern Department having laid before Congress a Letter receivd from Colo Stewart who was sent by them agreeable to Order of Congress,<sup>1</sup> to procure Cannon, wherein he informs that there is a Quantity of Cannon at Salisbury Foundery which the Governor & Council of Connecticut are willing to dispose of to the Continent, but demand the Price of seventy Pounds Lawful Money per Ton for 18 & 9 pounders and Eighty Pounds Lawfull Money per Ton for 6, 4 & 3 pounders, it is an order of Congress that the Committee aforesaid write to Govr Trumbull & inform him of the Contracts enterd into by Congress, state to him the Prejudice it will do to those Contracts and the ill Effects that must ensue to the Continent, should so high a Price be



given for these Cannon, and request him to lend the Cannon, which are much wanted for the Defence of Ticonderoga, and assure him that Congress will return them or others in Lieu of them as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup>

Your Honor will please to be informd that Congress have enterd into a Contract with the owners of a Foundry in the State of Maryland for 1000 Tons of Cannon from 32 down to 4 pounders to be deliverd in such proportion as Congress shall require at £36 10s per Ton accounting Dollars at 7/6.<sup>3</sup>

The Prejudice which will be done to this Contract if so high a Price should now be given for the Cannon at Salisbury, must be obvious. It will be an Example for all others to demand the like Prices; and moreover it may afford a Pretext for those who wish for occasions to spread Jealousy and Discord among the united States, to say, that the State of Connecticut have in this Instance taken Advantage of the Necessity of the Continent. As there is no Reason to entertain so unworthy a Sentiment of that State we earnestly wish that no Circumstance may take place which might gratify the Inclinations of our insidious Enemies to do an Injury to our common Cause. We are with the greatest Respect, your honors most obedient & very hbl Servts

S[amuel] A[dams]

W[illiam] W[hipple]

R[ichard] H[enry] L[ee]

H<sup>4</sup>

FC (NN). In the hand of Samuel Adams.

<sup>1</sup> In a letter of this date to Walter Stewart, Samuel Adams acknowledged the receipt of his January 23 letter to the committee and reported that he had laid it before Congress. "The Price of the Cannon at Salisbury so much exceeds that at which it is set in a Contract enterd into by Congress with the Owners of a Foundry in this State," Adams explained, "that Congress have thought proper not to allow it, but have directed the Committee to request Governor Trumbull to lend them, to be returnd or others in Lieu of them as soon as possible. The Come. have written accordingly; and I think it necessary to give you Notice of the Sense of Congress relating to the Price of Cannon as early as possible, that you may govern yourself thereby in your further Execution of your Commission." Adams, *Writings* (Cushing), 3:357. Stewart's January 23, 1777, letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, NN.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:111.

<sup>3</sup> See Robert Treat Paine to Samuel and Daniel Hughes, August 24, 1776.

<sup>4</sup> Either Benjamin Harrison or Thomas Heyward. See Committee of Congress to Walter Stewart, December 31, 1776.

## James Lovell to Joseph Trumbull

Dear Sir

B—— in M——. Feby. 12th [1777]

A man in yr. great Hurry of Business will easily excuse my not being wordy. In short, then, all but the main grand Circumstance of yr. Memorandum respecting yr. own & yr Brother's matters have been settled.

Money & Commission in particular. They were conducted upon the usual Scale of Time by which Things move here, which is not triple Time I assure you.<sup>1</sup>

Put on thy Sword; prepare thy Cuirass; *the* Beast is in fierce Rage and Fury against thee. The Breath of his Mouth is doubtless as the Flame of a Furnace. His Bile overfloweth even to the End of his armed Paws, so that a Flood of it is before our Eyes for Contemplation. How have thy Stars forsaken thee, my Friend! so that the baleful Influence of Hugh Gain hath Power over thy Fortune. By Rays of Light from that Meteor thou art thrown into View in one of the Moments of thy sarcastic Honesty. But, be not dismayed at this awful Picture of Evils intended against thee. For, Integer Vita thou will escape the Rage of the Beast. Thou shalt still survive to be a Packhorse for the Benefit of Posterity, with little present Emolument to thyself. This Lot attends thee, but attends thy *Virtue*.<sup>2</sup>

Dost thou dislike the past? Learn to talk Indian; ever praise thyself; brawl against others; fill thy Purse with Riches; and —— be despised.

Thine affectionately,

J L

RC (CtHi). Addressed: "To Joseph Trumbull Esqr. Commissy. Genl. now at Hartford."

<sup>1</sup> For further information on Joseph Trumbull's salary proposals, see Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull, October 22, 1776. The salary of his brother, Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., had been raised to \$75 per month on January 30, 1777. *JCC*, 7:73.

<sup>2</sup> For information on the publication of Joseph Trumbull's captured letter to William Williams, the event which stimulated Lovell to pen this florid paragraph, see Elbridge Gerry to Trumbull, January 2, 1777, note 2.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham

Sir

Philada. Feby. 12th. 1777

I have received many of your letters since I wrote you any & doubt not you will have been very uneasy for the fate of Philada. altho' you will no doubt learn from many other parts of the Continent before this gets to hand, that we are still safe after a narrow escape, but thank God our affairs now wear a much better face & I have good hopes that they never can get possession of this place. My time is so totally engaged one way or other that I cannot pretend just now to give you any detail of what has passed or to enter on Political matters, I send you some News papers & must refer to them.

The Congress are at Baltimore & have been there since the middle of December, I am here in a Committee of Congress that engrosses most of my time. I long to hear of the safe arrival of Monsr Prejent.<sup>1</sup> He had a very narrow escape at our Capes but a miss is as good as a mile, they say, and if he got safe I dare say Capt Ord & you have done something clever together by this time. I am loading the Sloop Independance with

some Indico & flour and believe she will in a very little time go back to your address. The Sachem is also getting ready but her Voyage not yet determined on. I received the Sundry Goods You Shipped in good order by these Vessells & have made good sales of them, the Accounts whereof shall be furnished soon. The sloop Morris is not arrived nor have I heard any tidings of her. The Brig intended for No Carolina was not arrived there the 6th Jany from South Carolina I have not heard of a long time, but approve of all the concerns you have given me in the several adventures mentioned. I cannot at this time pretend to reply to your sundry letters as during the late fright I sent away my Family, Books, papers, Money &c. My Family are still in Maryland & I have but just got back my Books &c so that it will take me some time to enter & arrange the business I have been doing since they were sent away.

I hope Mr. Prejent will send back the Ship Esperance here loaden with Mollasses, if he does & she gets in the Voyage will make a Ministerial Fortune. That Article has been sold for 18/ to 20/ per Galln., Rum 25/ to 30/, Coffee 4/ to 5/ per lb., Cotton 4/ to 7/6 per lb, Musc[ovad]o Sugar £8 to £10 per [cwt]. You may be sure these prices also make me very desirous that the Brig Cornelia & Moliey shou'd bring back the Mollasses ordered by the Owners as well as the other things. I long to see her & the Ship Betsy return as my design is for them to visit you again. I have just recd advices from Baltimore that determines me to send Young to you soon as possible & others shall follow. You may depend on my best endeavours to push forward remittances to you [both] on public & private Acct. Remember I pay your draft to Capt Young & charge you for the amot accordingly. You shall soon hear very fully from me as I am, sir,  
Your obedt Servant, Robt Morris

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Morris to Bingham, December 4, 1776.

## Robert Morris to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety

Gentn

Philada. Feby 12. 1777

In Consequence of a Resolve of Congress passed the 5th Instant I am to make application to you for the use of the Armed Ship belonging to this State if you think she can be spared for a Voyage on acct of the Continent, without endangering this City during her absence. The Congress will make reasonable Compensation for the Service & the Ship to be Valued before sailing & be at their Risque.<sup>1</sup> Your answer will oblige Gentn, Your obed Servant, Robt Morris

P.S. I think it has heretofore been said that the Ship was not necessary for the Defense of the River, if the Council are of that opinion & wish to sell her I judge Congress would make the purchase.

RC (privately owned, 1975).

<sup>1</sup> Congress had resolved "that the several States be requested to order their armed vessels into the service of the united States, under the direction of the Secret Committee . . . to export produce, and import military stores for the next campaign." *JCC*, 7:93. There is no evidence in the minutes of the council to indicate that it made any formal response to this resolution.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Feby. 12th. 1777

I have this morning received the letter & two parcells of money sent herewith, from Mr. Hancock who requests you will send them in by a Flag. The letter is for Lieutt Colo. Rawlings,<sup>1</sup> one parcell said to Contain six half Joes is for him & the other said to Contain ten half Joes for Lieutt. Cresap but both are to be delivered to Colo Rawlings according to the terms of the letter herewith.

A ship from France brings no later Accounts than the 16 Novr. when it was not possible for Doctr Franklin to be arrived. This Ship is also loaden with Salt. I am honoured with your letter of the 5th Inst.<sup>2</sup> and am now taking the necessary measures for sending the prisoners into New York by the way of South Amboy. I have supplied Mr. Palmer with fifty Pounds Sterling & send Genl Lee his draft for it.

I am your Excellencys Obed Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Apparently a letter from an unknown person. If it was a letter from Hancock to Lt. Col. Moses Rawlings, who had been taken prisoner in the capture of Ft. Washington in November 1776, it has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:107-8.

## John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon

Dear David,

Baltimore, Feb. 12, 1777.

Though I wrote you from Pequea lately,<sup>1</sup> and have not since heard from you, I could not omit saluting you by Mr. Baldwin. I have heard from Jos. Lane that you are well, and that you are lusty and grown much. That is a pleasing but very inconsiderable circumstance, compared with the accounts I had before, and confirmed by him, of your applying diligently to your business.<sup>2</sup> I wish you to be sensible how much joy I have



had from this information, and therefore often repeat it. My first concern is that you should fear God: and as about the new year, had we been at Princeton, I should have taken an opportunity to deal particularly and seriously with you and Fanny, as you know; so now that you are at a distance, I pray you to remember that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom; and that it is now high time for you both, personally to renew your baptismal engagements, and solemnly give yourselves to God—I pray earnestly that he may renew you in the spirit of your minds. Next to *the one thing needful*, you know I am chiefly concerned for your improvement in useful knowledge, and fitness for the duties of active life; and I am persuaded by the taste you have taken, you will find the highest pleasure and the greatest honour by attending to your duty. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Let this letter be common to you and Fanny, and to nobody else.

I am, dear David, Your affectionate father,

Jno. Witherspoon.

MS not found; reprinted from *Christian Advocate* 2 (October 1824): 444.

<sup>1</sup> While staying at the home of Rev. Robert Smith, a relation by marriage, in Pequea, Pa., Witherspoon had written the following letter to David on February 2:

"I doubt not you have all been sufficiently anxious about us, since the incursion of the enemy into New Jersey. I have just written to Mr. Smith the substance of what can be said of our present situation. I have been at Princeton, and find that by Mr. Montgomery's care, not many of my books are gone, and but little of the standing furniture is destroyed. John Goodman has been exceedingly careful and faithful about the farm; so that upon the whole, though I was the object of the enemy's distinguished hatred, I have escaped, through divine goodness, much better than I expected. I wrote in a long letter to Mr. Smith, from Baltimore, how we set off, bringing one wagon load of effects, and driving the four colts—they have been billeted in the neighbourhood here. Our sheep are all destroyed. There are, I think, old and young, fourteen of the cattle saved. . . .

"Your Mamma is well, and remembers you kindly. I need hardly tell you that our greatest comfort now is to hear of the welfare of our children. It gives me unspeakable pleasure to hear that you apply to your studies, both in teaching and reading. You will find a vast advantage in the French now, for there are multitudes of Frenchmen come over, and almost every body is ambitious of learning the French. I am often employed as interpreter to those who come to the Congress, and have many visits from them. See, my dear child, that you lay the foundation of every thing that is good in the fear of God. Next, learn to improve time well, and be regular in the distribution of it.

"I received your letter of the 20th of December on the 4th of January, but had just before written to Mr. Smith, you and Fanny. Be as accurate as possible in writing your letters, and take pains to improve your hand. I wish Fanny may employ herself this winter in something useful, and not spend the whole time in visiting and amusement. . . .

"James is aid de camp to General Maxwell, and if his life is spared, will be sufficiently provided for in the army. He was well the last time I heard from him. I shall expect to hear from you regularly by post to Baltimore, where I am going immediately.

"I have been making inquiry into the conduct of the enemy, which has been dreadful. At Trenton they killed Mr. Roxburgh, Presbyterian minister at the

Forks of Delaware. Though he fell down on his knees and begged his life, yet they pierced him through and through with their bayonets, and mangled him in a most shocking manner. Some of the people at Princeton say they thought they were killing me, and boasted that they had done it when they came back. But this is uncertain—the fact of his death and the manner of it is beyond all doubt. I must write a few lines to Fanny, and am, with my best respects to John Smith, Dear David, Yours, &c. Jno. Witherspoon.” *Christian Advocate* 2 (October 1824): 443–44. The ellipses are all in the Tr, and the “inquiry” mentioned by Witherspoon grew out of his membership on the committee appointed on January 16 to investigate the conduct of the invading British and Hessians in New Jersey and New York. *JCC*, 7:42–43. Witherspoon was not the only New Jersey delegate whose property was pillaged during the British advance through that state. See Abraham Clark to James Caldwell, February 4, 1777, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> David was teaching at Hampden-Sidney Academy in Virginia.

<sup>3</sup> Ellipsis in Tr.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 13th. 1777

Major Ottendorffe came yesterday from Camp & relates that an Action happened last Saturday at Quibble Town in the Jerseys between a Foraging Party of the Enemy, not less than 3000 Strong & about 500 of ours, who took the advantage of the Ground maintained as long as they cou'd keeping up a smart fire the whole time & soon after they were forced to retreat, a reinforcement came that made them about 2000. They then attacked the Enemy & drove them from the Field of Battle into their Works at Brunswick having left 327 Dead Men behind them. They had Eight Field pieces & our side none. This is the Substance of what Genl Gates cou'd collect from the Majors bad French, Dutch & English Linguo. We are waiting with impatience for the particulars by express from the General & will send it forward the moment it comes.<sup>1</sup> The Major thinks the Enemy will not remain much longer in the Jerseys. Therefore we hope Congress have determined to return here where their presence is so very necessary to the various Works going forward. We hope also to be speedily informed that the Loan office Interest is raised to six per Cent as money is most exceedingly wanted, The Quarter Master General, Commissarys & every department in the utmost distress for want of Money. Capt B. Jones of the Artillery confirms Major Ottendorfs Account & Colo Biddle writes his Father “an Action happened on Saturday & ended Gloriously.”

We are in great haste sir, Your obedt Servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> The committee's report of this battle was greatly exaggerated. See Executive Committee to Hancock, February 15, 1777.

## Francis Lewis to Horatio Gates

Dear General

Baltimore 13th Feby. 1777

I yesterday received a letter from my friend Mr. Garrit Repalje, dated (from Squire's Point 20 Miles from Morristown) the 4th Inst, informing me that Mrs. Lewis with her Daughter, were returned into New York, but that he should on that day, send off his wife and son to head Quart. where if they can procure a Passport, to proceed to New York in order to bring out Mrs Lewis and her Daughter to his house at Squire's Point, from whence he will conduct them to Phila. Should this be effected I presume they will return through the Camp, if so, must beg you Sir will interpose your kind Offices that they may be furnished with a Baggage Waggon &c to expedite their Journey.

I am in hopes Congress will soon returne to Phila., where I shall hope to hear often from you. With my best wishes for your wellfare I am, Dr Sir,  
Your very Humble Servt, F Lewis

RC (PHi).

## Medical Committee to George Washington

Sir

Baltimore Feby 13th 1777

The Congress Apprehending that the Small Pox may greatly endanger the Lives of our fellow Citizens who compose the army under your Excellency's Command, and also very much embarrass the Military Operations, have directed their Medical Committee to request your Excellency to give Orders that all who have not had that Disease may be Inoculated, if your Excellency Shall be of Opinion that it can be done without prejudice to your Operations.<sup>1</sup>

Some Battalions from Virginia are now on their march to Join you, and are ordered to take the upper rout, in order to avoid Philadelphia where the Infection now prevails. It is submitted to your Excellency whether they ought not to stop somewhere in order to undergo Inoculation. The Committee request your Excellency to give the Necessary orders if it be your Opinion that they can be so long spared from Service.

We beg leave to remind you that the Southern Troops are greatly alarmed at the Small Pox, and that it very often proves fatal to them in the Natural Way. This Suggestion we doubt not will, with regard to this object, draw your particular attention to the Troops who may be ordered to Join you from those States. We hope Sir this attention may prevent the Danger and Inconvenience apprehended by Congress and we have the most perfect reliance on your Excellencys well known Humanity, and

singular regard to your Troops for carrying their Intention into Effect, if it be advisable.

I have the Honor to be with the utmost respect (in the name of the medical Committee) Your Excellency's Most obedient Servant,

B. Rush Chairman

RC (DLC). In a clerical hand and signed by Rush.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:110. No response to this letter has been found, but Washington had already decided to begin an inoculation program to prevent the spread of smallpox to his southern troops from troops "coming from the Eastern States." For Washington's February 10 letters on this subject, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:128-32.

## Elbridge Gerry to Robert Treat Paine

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feby 14. 1777

I received your agreeable Scrawl of Jany 10th, & having decyphered it shall preserve the alphabet to explain your next. The Figures I am not yet Master of, there not being others to compare them with so that I am uncertain with respect to the Date whether it was the 10th or the 18th.<sup>1</sup>

I fully agree with You in thinking it necessary, that the Measures recommended by the Convention of the N E States for "preventing Monopolies & Oppression" must at all Events be adopted. Trade it is true will regulate itself in ordinary Times & with a fixed Medium, but when it happens that a Community can be but partly supplied with the Necessaries & Conveniencies of Life, it must be evident that without some Regulations the Merchant or Trader will have an unbounded power to demand of the Wealthy what portion of their Interest he pleases for his Commodities & that these will not only be unreasonably plundered of their Money, but that the Distress must altogether fall on the poor who will not be able to relieve their Necessities untill all who have more property are fully satisfied. Add to this the Disadvantages of a fluctuating depreciating Medium & It is evident that the publick from Want of such Regulations must be loaded with Enormous Debts by Demands that will increase in proportion to the Extortion of the Merchants & Traders mentioned. Another Reason wch may evince the Necessity of such Laws [is?] when we consider that Foreigners have not only supplied Us wth their Commodities at a most extravagant advance, but at the same Time have procured our produce at a much lower Rate than it was ever before sold at, whereby with a single Cargo a person may have secured to himself an independent Fortune. The Execution of such Laws are undoubtedly difficult but it being the Interest of such Multitudes to assist their operations, the Result will undoubtedly be diligently watched. We have sent two



Millions in Loan office Certificates to the NE States, but I doubt of Success with the Interest offered of 4 per Cent. We have also sent them half a Million of Dollars to pay the Bounty which will probably reach You e'er this. The Lottery Tickets are left with the Manager; why they are not sent to all the States, I know not, but shall move for Enquiry.

I should be sorry to hear of the loss of Ticonderoga but have no great Expectations from Fortifications of any Kind, if We are superior without, the Enemy will be soon subdued within, & the reverse must necessarily happen unless We preserve the Superiority mentioned.

I am glad to hear of the brass Foundery. Nothing is more essential than a good Train of Artillery & I hope You will push this Measure with Vigour.<sup>2</sup>

With respect to the Howitzer I agree with You both in their Usefulness on board Ships & in Fortifications, & cannot entertain a Doubt that Congress mean to have them procured at all Events; if there should be Time I will propose to Congress your Query & Transmit it with this Letter, otherwise I think You had best proceed & send them on agreeable to former order.

Congress since their Session in this place have given General Washington large power, which You have undoubtedly seen as they were transmitted to the several States. They have augmented the Army to 116 Batalions, & order'd 2000 Horse & as many of the Train to be forthwith raised. D[r]. F[ranklin] is to go from F[rance] to the C[ourt] of M[adrid] & many other Measures with respect to foreign applications for Subsidies, & Treaties with other European powers, have taken place.

The president & our Colleagues are well & return their Comp., Mrs Yard & Miss Lucy at Philadelphia where Congress are pressing to return. As any Thing new occurs shall inform You of it & remain sir your very hum serv,

E Gerry

P.S. I inclose the resolution of Congress relative to the Howitzers,<sup>3</sup> The number mentioned for Tyonderoga are agreeable to a late requisition from G. Schuyler. The Managers are directed to send on their Certificates without delay. The shot were not mentioned or shells but must be sent of Course.

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Paine's January 18 letter to Gerry is in the Gratz Collection, PHI.

<sup>2</sup> Paine had reported that the furnace for casting brass cannon was finished and that they expected "in a little time to go to work." Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> On this date Congress resolved that Paine "contract with Colonel Gridley for forty 8-inch iron howitzers, upon terms he shall judge reasonable, and cause ten of them to be mounted, and sent to Ticonderoga." *JCC*, 7:119. Paine's April 12 response to Gerry is in Austin, *Life of Gerry*, 1:219-23.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. Feby 14th. 1777

This will be presented you by Mr Burke late of Jamaica a Gentn that is desirous of entering into our Service.<sup>1</sup> He is just come from Baltimore where he has obtained such Credentials as I am certain renders it unnecessary for me to Say much on the Subject, especially as he is a Stranger to me except by the introduction of a Verbal Message from Mr. Hancock requesting that I shou'd add to the Number of his introductory letters to you and I flatter myself this Gentn. may render himself honor & this Country Service under your auspices. I ever am, Sir, Your obedt hble Sevt.

Robt Morris

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See John Hancock to George Washington, February 6, 1777.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

Feby. 14. 1777.

Upon the question whether the Congress should recommend to the States to adopt the plan for reducing and regulating the price of labor, manufactures, imports, and provisions which had been adopted in the four New England States.<sup>1</sup>

It was said in the negative by *Mr Jas Smith*. That such a recommendation would interfere with the domestic police of each State which were of too delicate a nature to be touched by the congress.

Dr Rush. I am against the whole of the resolution. It is founded in the contrary of justice, policy & necessity as has been declared in the resolution. The wisdom & power of goverment have been employed in all ages to regulate the price of necessaries to no purpose. It was attempted in Engd. in the reign of Edward II by the English parliament but without effect. The laws for limiting the price of every thing were repealed, and Mr Hume who mentions this fact records even the very Attempt as a monument of human folly. The congress with all its authority have failed in a former instance of regulating the price of goods. You have limited Bohea tea to 3/4 of a dollar, and yet it is daily sold before your eyes for 30s. The Committee of Philada limited the price of West India goods About a year ago. But what was the consequence? The merchants it is true sold their rum, sugar & molasses at the price limited by the committee, but they charged a heavy profit upon the barrel, or the paper which contained the rum or the sugar. Consider sir the danger of failing in this experiment. The Salvation of this continent depends upon the Authority of this congress being held as sacred as the cause of liberty itself. Suppose we should fail producing the effects we wish

for by the resolution before you. Have we any charecter to spare? Have we committed no mistakes in the management of the public Affairs of America? We have sir. It becomes us therefore to be careful of the remains of our Authority & charecter. It is a common thing to cry aloud of the rapacity & extortion in every branch of business & among every class of men. This has led some people to decry the *public virtue* of this country. True sir there is not so much of it as we could wish, but there is much more that is sometimes allowed on this floor. We estimate our virtue by a false barometer when we measure it by the price of goods. The extortion we complain off arises only from the excessive quantity of our money. Now sir a failure in this Attempt to regulate the price of goods will encrease the clamors against the rapacity of dealers, and thus depreciate our public virtue. Consider sir the consequence of measuring our virtue by this false standard. You will add weight to the Arguments used at St James's to explode patriotism altogether, & by denying its existence in this country destroy it forever. Persuade a woman that there is no such thing as chastity, & if there is that She does not possess it, and She may be easily seduced if She was as chaste as Diana. Sir, The price of goods may be compared to a number of light substances in a bason of water. The hand may keep them down for a while, but nothing can detain them on the bottom of the bason but an Abstraction of the water. The continent labours under a universal malady. From the crown of her head to the Soal of her feet She is full of disorders. She requires the most powerful tonic medicines. The resolution before you is Nothing but an *Opiate*. It may compose the continent for a night, but She will soon awaken again to a fresh sense of her pain & misery.

*Col: Richd Henry Lee*, in the affirmative. Mr President, The learned Doctor has mistook the disorder of the continent. She labours under a spasm, and Spasms he knows require *palliative* medicines. I look upon the resolution before you only as a temporary remedy. But it is absolutely necessary. It is true the regulations formerly recommended by Congress were not faithfully carried into execution, but this was owing to the want of regular governments. New & regular governments have been instituted in every part of America, and these will enable all classes of people to carry the resolutions into execution.

Mr Saml Chase, in the Affirmative. Mr President, This is a necessary resolution. It is true if failed formerly in Philada. because it Abounded with tories. But it succeeded in Maryland. It must be done. The mines of Peru would not support a war at the present high price of the necessities of life. Your Soldiers cannot live on their pay. It must be raised unless we limit the price of the cloathing & other articles necessary for them.

*Mr. Seargent*—negative. The price of goods cannot be regulated while the quantity of our money and the articles of life are allowed to fluctuate.

This is & must be the case with us, therefore we cannot regulate the price of anything.

*Col James Wilson*, negative. Mr President, I differ from the gentleman from Virginia about the possibility of carrying the resolution before you into execution. The modern governments I am sure have not half the vigilance or Authority that the conventions & committees formerly had, and yet these failed in this business. *Connecticut* where the influence of good laws prevail greatly, adopted this plan with diffidence. There are certain things sir which Absolute power cannot do. The whole power of the Roman Emperors could not add a single letter to the Alphabet. Augustus could not compel old batchelors to marry. He found out his error, and wisely repealed his edict least he should bring his Authority into contempt. Let us recommend the resolution to the *consideration* of the states only without giving our Opinion on it, that they may discuss it with unbiased minds. Foreign trade is absolutely necessary to enable us to carry on the war. This resolution will put an end to it, for it will hang as a dead weight upon all the operations of external commerce.

Dr Witherspoon, *negative*. Sir, It is a wise maxim to avoid those things which our enemies wish us to practise. Now I find that our enemies have published the act of the assembly of Connecticut for regulating the price of necessaries in the New York paper in order to shew our distress from that Quarter. I believe the regulations would be just, if the quantity of money and the scarcity of goods bore an exact proportion to each Other. But the price of goods is by no means proportioned to the quantity of money in every thing. The encrease of price began 1st upon the *Luxuries* 2ly Necessaries, 3rd manufactories & 4ly grain, and Other produce of the earth. Now the reason why it has reached the grain &c last, is owing to their quantity being plentiful & to an overproportion of money. Remember laws are not almighty. It is beyond the power of despotic princes to regulate the price of goods. Tea & Salt are higher in proportion than any Other Articles of trade owing entirely to their price being limited. In Pennsylvania salt was limited to 15s but was sold for 60s per bushel, while at the same time it was sold in Virginia where there was no limitation for 10s a bushel. I fear if we fail in this measure we shall weaken the Authority of Congress. We shall do mischief by teaching the continent to *rest* upon it. If we limit *one* article, we must limit *every* thing, and this is impossible.

*Mr John Adams*, Negative. Perhaps I may here speak agst. the sense of my constituents, but I cannot help it. I much doubt the justice, policy & necessity of the resolution. Its policy & necessity depend upon its practicability, and if it is practicable, I beleive it will be *unjust*. It amounts to the same as raising the value of your money to double its present value & this experiment was tried in vain even in the absolute government of France. The high price of many Articles arises from their scarcity. If we



regulate the price of imports we shall immediately put to stop to them for ever.

Dr Rush. Sir, It has been said that the high price of goods in Philada. arose from the monopolies, and extortion of the tories. Here I must say the tories are blamed without cause. A similar Spirit of Speculation prevails among the Whigs in Philada. They are disposed to realise thier money in lands, or goods, But this is not owing to any timidity or disaffection among them. They fear the further depreciation of your money by future emissions. Stop your emissions of money & you will stop Speculation, & fill your treasury from the loan Offices. I beg leave to inform Congress that the committee of Philada. was supported by the country people in thier Attempt to regulate the price of West India goods, but were notwithstanding unsuccessful. Now sir, the country people are equally concerned with the merchants in keeping Up the price of every thing, and in eluding laws for reducing them. I am not apt to reply to *words* much less to *play* upon them. The gentleman from Virginia has miscalled the malady of the continent. It is not a Spasm, but a dropsy. I beg leave to prescribe two remedies for it. 1 Raising the interest of the money we borrow to 6 per cent. this like a cold bath will give an immediate *Spring* to our affairs—& 2 *taxation*. This like *tapping*, will diminish the Quantity of our Money, and give a proper value to what remains.

The resolution was amended. The plan of the 4 New England states was *referred* only to the Other states, to act as they tho't proper.<sup>2</sup>

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

<sup>1</sup> This debate pertained to "the report of the committee on the proceedings of the committees from the four New England States" concluded on January 2, 1777. See *JCC*, 7:87, 93, 97, 111–12, 118, 121.

<sup>2</sup> For the final form of the resolve that was adopted on February 15, see *JCC*, 7:124–25.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feb. 15. 1777

Mr. Hall, by whom this Letter will be sent, will carry several Letters to you, which have been written and delivered to him, several Days. He has settled his Business, agreeably.

I have not received a Line from the Massachusetts, since I left it.

Whether We shall return to Philadelphia, soon, or not, I cannot say. I rather conjecture it will not be long. You may write to me, in Congress, and the Letter will be brought me, wherever I shall be.

I am settled now agreeably enough in my Lodgings, there is nothing in this Respect that lies uneasily upon my Mind, except the most extravagant Price which I am obliged to give for every Thing. My Constituents

will think me extravagant, but I am not. I wish I could sell or send home my Horses, but I cannot. I must have Horses and a Servant, for Congress will be likely to remove several Times in the Course of the ensuing Year.

I am impatient to hear from you, and most tenderly anxious for your Health and Happiness. I am also most affectionately solicitous for my dear N. J. C. and T. to whom remember Yours.<sup>1</sup>

We long to hear of the Formation of a new Army. We shall loose the most happy opportunity of destroying the Enemy this Spring, if We do not exert ourselves instantly.

We have from New Hampshire a Coll. Thornton, a Physician by Profession, a Man of Humour. He has a large Budget of droll Stories, with which he entertains Company perpetually.

I heard about Twenty or five and twenty Years ago, a Story of a Physician in Londonderry, who accidentally met with one of our new England Enthusiasts, call'd Exh[orters]. The Fanatic soon began to examine the Dr. concerning the Articles of his Faith, and what he thought of original Sin?

Why, says the Dr., I satisfy myself about it in this manner. Either original Sin is divisible or indivisible. If it was divisible every descendant of Adam and Eve must have a Part, and the share which falls to each Individual at this Day, is so small a Particle, that I think it is not worth considering. If indivisible, then the whole Quantity must have descended in a right Line, and must now be possessed by one Person only, and the Chances are Millions and Millions and Millions to one that that Person is now in Asia or Africa, and that I have nothing to do with it.

I told Thornton the story and that I suspected him to be the Man. He said he was. He belongs to Londonderry.

RC (MHi). Adams. *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:161-62.

<sup>1</sup> That is, their children Nabby, John, Charles, and Thomas.

## Samuel Adams to John Pitts

My dear sir

Baltimore Feb 15 1777

I am favord with yours of the 21 of December for which I am much obligd to you.<sup>1</sup> I am much concernd to hear that the Tories in Boston & Massachusetts Bay have lately grown insolent & that no Measures are taken to suppress their Insolence. They are the most virulent, & I am of Opinion, the most dangerous Enemies of America. They do not indeed openly appear in Arms, but they do more Mischief secretly. I am very apprehensive that they greatly operate to the preventing Inlistments and doing other essential Injury to our Cause. If they are not properly dealt with, I am perswaded, the Publick will much regret the Omission very soon. I do not wish for needless Severities; but effectual Measures, and

severe ones if others are insufficient, to prevent their pernicious Councils & Machinations, I think ought to be taken, and that without any Delay. It will be Humanity shown to Millions, who are in more Danger of being reduced to thralldom & Misery by those Wretches than by British & Hessian Barbarians. I cannot conceive why a Law is not made declaratory of Treason & other Crimes & properly to punish those who are guilty of them. If to conspire the Death of a King is Treason and worthy of Death, surely a Conspiracy to ruin a State deserves no less a Punishment.<sup>2</sup> I have Reason to think you have a Number of such Conspirators among you; and believe me, you will soon repent of it, if you do not speedily take Notice of them. But let me ask you my Friend, Whether some of the late Addressers, Protesters and Associators, are not seen in the Circles, in the Houses and at the Tables of Whigs? Is there not Reason to expect that those who exiled themselves thro Fear of the just Vengeance of their Countrymen will be invited by the kind of Treatment of those who have equal Reason to dread that Vengeance, to return into the Bosom of their much injurd Country. But I need add no more. Believe me to be cordially, your Friend,

FC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> This is probably a reference to Pitts' December 25, 1776, letter, which is in the Adams Papers, NN.

<sup>2</sup> The Massachusetts General Court did pass legislation confiscating loyalist property and establishing oaths of allegiance. See James Warren to Samuel Adams, April 2, 1777, *Warren-Adams Letters*, 2:448.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb. 15th. [1777]

Yesterday was consumed in desultory debates upon a report of a special committee upon the proceedings of the four New England Governments above mentioned, & it was recommitted. This day it was brought in under a form agreeable to what was the sense of the House on what was yesterday considered. At first it expressed the opinion of Congress, that the proceedings were founded in justice, policy, & necessity, & merited the warmest approbation. The second declared neither approbation nor opinion except particularly relating to the New England Governments, because of their peculiar circumstances, but proposed laying it before the other States for their imitation if they thought proper, avoiding as much as possible any expression that might suggest to the States that Congress approved or disapproved. In this form it passed without a negative; & it was voted that several States should be advised to confer with each other on this subject: viz New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, & Virginia: North Carolina, South Carolina, & Georgia.<sup>1</sup> Nothing very remarkable happened in this debate except that Virginia insisted

## I N C O N G R E S S,

F E B R U A R Y 15, 1777.

*Resolved,*

**T**H A T considering the situation of the New-England States, CONGRESS approve of the measures adopted and recommended by the Committee from the Four New-England States for the defence of the State of Rhode-Island, and also of the measures to be taken for preventing the depreciation of their Currency, except that part which recommends the striking bills bearing interest, which being a measure tending to depreciate the Continental and other Currencies, ought not to be adopted; and it is so recommended by Congress to the said New-England States.

That the plan for regulating the price of labour, of manufactures, and of internal produce within those States, and of goods imported from Foreign parts, except military stores, be referred to the consideration of the other United States, and that it be recommended to them to adopt such measures as they shall think most expedient to remedy the evils occasioned by the present fluctuating and exorbitant prices of the articles aforesaid.

That for this purpose it be recommended to the legislatures, or in their recess to the executive powers of the States of *New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia*, to appoint Commissioners to meet at *York-Town*, in *Pennsylvania*, on the third Monday in *March* next, to consider of and form a system of regulation adapted to those States, to be laid before the respective legislatures of each State for their approbation.

That for the like purpose it be recommended to the legislatures or executive powers in recess of the legislatures of the States of *North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia*, to appoint Commissioners to meet at *Charles-Town*, in *South-Carolina*, on the first Monday in *May* next.

That it be recommended to the legislatures of the several States, to take the most effectual measures for manning the Continental Frigates fitted for the sea in their respective states.

That it be earnestly recommended to the United States to avoid as far as possible further emissions of Paper Money, and to take the most effectual measures for speedily drawing in and sinking their Paper Currency already emitted.

That such parts of the proceedings of the said Committees as relate to the price of labour and other things be published and transmitted to the other states, together with these resolutions.

*By Order of Congress,*JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*


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*Baltimore:* Printed by JOHN DUNLAP, in *Market-street.*

Resolves on the New England Convention



on being connected with Maryland, & refused to be connected with the Southern States. The Delegates present from Virginia were Richard Henry Lee, Francis Lightfoot Lee, & Mann Page, all residing on Rappahannock & Potowmack rivers. The Delegate from North Carolina represented that great part of the exportation of North Carolina was through Virginia, that her market was therefore in that State, & that she ought undoubtedly to be consulted in regulating the prices since she was so much interested therein: that it [was] unjust & ungenerous in Virginia to endeavour to regulate them without her, & evidently shewed she was willing to do what would affect the interest of North Carolina without her knowledge or consent. Virginia persisted, & the vote passed for her conferring with Maryland &c.

The question was now proposed for the conference of the Southern States. The Delegates opposed it, alledging that their articles of exportation would be always very low, by reason of the danger & difficulty of exporting: that none had provisions to spare but North Carolina, & her market for them being chiefly to Virginia, she was precluded from regulation in that article by the regulation made in Virginia, of which as she would have no notice she could not accommodate herself thereto, & her Delegate declared she had too much vigilance & sagacity to make any regulation, since it might preclude her from taking advantage of circumstances to defend herself from injustice of her neighbour Virginia: that since Virginia chose to confer with other States in making regulations which might affect North Carolina, & refused to confer with her where her interest was so nearly concerned, Virginia was entitled to no attention from North Carolina, & she ought to believe it in the power of her citizens to avail themselves of all advantages which circumstances might throw in their way. The Question put—all voted for the conference of the Southern States except their own Delegates.<sup>2</sup> R.H. Lee privately told the Delegate from North Carolina, that he need not be disturbed on this occasion, because Virginia could make no regulation but what must affect herself. The Delegate replied that it was arrogantly assuming to judge of her affairs, & affect them without her consent: it was taking advantage of her situation to be the arbiter of the commerce of North Carolina, & it was shewing an entire disregard to her interest & circumstances, & leaving them entirely to depend on the decisions of the Northern States, without even being consulted. The Delegate declared he thought this such an instance of contempt & disregard in Virginia, that he could not but receive it with indignation.

Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:124; and John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., January 30, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:124–25.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 15th. 1777.

Before this Time the Loan-Office Certificates sent to our State I hope have reached it. I should be glad to be informed as early as possible what Sum will probably be collected among Us; and what the Sentiments of the Assembly are on the Interest which Congress have ordered to be given for Money borrowed by them. It seems that the Committee of the States of New England tho't the Interest of Four per Cent sufficient for the Purpose, and meant when the States should borrow Money to emit it at five per Cent, thinking that there was the Difference of One per Cent between continental and colonial security. As there may possibly be a Question about Increase of Interest hereafter I should be glad to be informed how high the Assembly thinks it would be proper for Congress to go in Order to answer their Purpose of collecting Continental Dollars by Loan-Office Certificates in our State; for by their Sentiments I mean to be governed. At present it Stands at Four per Cent and I hope that an Increase of Interest will never become necessary; for thereby the Public Debt would be enhanced. Its continuing at four per Cent depends greatly upon the Encouragement that the Assemblies of the Several States shall give to the Loan Office. Our State will I dont doubt pay as they have ever done a due Regard to the Resolutions of Congress; for it is her Interest to stand well with the superintending Power of these States. Congress have taken into Consideration the Doings of the Committee of the New-England States, and have approved of the Measures taken for the Defence of the State You Govern, of the Regulation of the Prices of Articles of Produce &c, and have recommended it to the other States in the Union to take such Measures for regulating and fixing the Price of Provisions &c as they may think expedient. They approved also of the Embargo; but disapprove of the Emission of Paper Money by the States. This is, as well as I can recollect, the Substance of the Resolves, for they past this Day and I have not been able to get a Copy of them. They will be published; but as I know it will give the State great Pleasure to be assured that Congress approve of the Measures taken for its Defence, as that Approbation involves in it the Idea of paying the Expence thereof, I cannot forbear giving you the earliest Intelligence of it.<sup>1</sup>

A Question of considerable Importance was started on considering the Doings of the Committee. A resolve was moved for in some such Form as this—Resolved that as the Communication between Congress & the New England States was interrupted, and the State of Rhode-Island was threatend with an Invasion or actually invaded Congress considering the Necessity of their taking Measures for their Defence approve of their

Meeting &c. The Advocates for the Motion went upon this Principle that none of the United States have a Right to meet without the prior or subsequent Approbation of Congress; those that took the other Side of the Question asserted that any Two or more of the States have a Right to meet for the Purpose of consulting upon Matters relative to themselves; and after a long metaphysical Debate which took up Part of three Days Congress were equally divided. All the Members agreed that the Meeting was right considering the Circumstances; but split upon the Question of Right hinted at.<sup>2</sup>

The Two Armies remain in the same Situation they did. Ours at Morris Town and the British Army at Brunswick. There have been lately two or three Skirmishes, in One of which We should have defeated the Enemy and taken a Number of their Waggon had it not been for the Cowardice of a Colo. Buckner of Virginia. However We did not loose a Man, but the Enemy by the Account given by the Country People had their Colonel Commandant killed and a Major wounded, and between 20 and 30 Privates killed. In another altho' the Enemy's Detachment consisted of upwards of 2000 with 8 Field Peices; and ours only of 700 without a Field Peice; yet it seems that after repeated Brushses, they retired about a Quarter of a Mile from the Enemy, made a stand and the Enemy withdrew. We lost an Officer or Two and about 12 Soldiers. The British it is said suffered most. Our Army on the East Side of Hudsons River have been compelled by the Inclemency of the Season to retire to White Plains. The Enemy have suffered greatly for Want of Forage and are like to suffer more. There is no Danger of their attempting to pass the Delaware very suddenly. Congress talk of returning to Philadelphia. I hope my next will be dated at that City. I shall rejoice when I get near the Scene of War, and out of this expensive dirty Town.

I wait with Impatience to hear something clever from our State. The last Account from thence is very disagreeable. A Mr. Nesey hath sent a Story to the Marine Committee something like this, that the Diamond Frigate ran ashore upon Warwick Neck, that Commodore Hopkins ordered the Sloop Providence, upon receiving this Intelligence down the River, that after firing some Shot into her Stern the Sloop returned to the Fleet, that the Diamond after lying aground 36 hours, if I remember aright, got off, that the Wind was fair to run down the River, and therefore the Diamond could not receive any Assistance or Support from the Brit[is]h Fleet, and that our Fleet lay at Anchor and suffered the Diamond to go off, altho' they were but 6 Miles distant from her. I cannot believe this Account because I cannot believe that the Commander in Chief of the American Navy would let an Opportunity slip by him so favorable for taking or destroying a Frigate, and so favorable for acquiring Glory; nor can I believe that the Army would suffer a Ship to ly aground so long

unattacked when with Two or Three Field Peices they might blow her to Peices.<sup>3</sup>

I don't hear any Thing about an additional Delegate, nor a Word about the Resolve of Decr. fixing the Salary of the Delegates. A Delegate ought to be appointed, if it is not already done, and I am sure not a Member of the Assembly who considers the amazing Rise of Board and every Article of Life will think it unreasonable to alter that Resolve and raise the Salary from that Time. It may be relied on that I should never have dropt a Word about it, if I had thought it competent.

Heartily wishing for the Prosperity of the State of Rhode Island, the Success of our Cause and the Establishment of Independency I continue to be with great Respect, Yr Honor's most Obedt. humble Servant,

William Ellery

P.S. The Money for the Bounty of our new Levies is sent to the Paymaster of the Eastern Department.

Tr (DLC). Endorsed by Edmund C. Burnett: "MSS of William D. Ely, Providence, Declaration of Independence, III."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:124-25; and John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., January 30, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> See Benjamin Rush's and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 4 and 12, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Despite Ellery's skepticism, the foregoing account of the escape of H.M.S. *Diamond* was essentially true. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:845-46, 852-54, 923-24.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

February 15th 1777

We are very Sorry it is not in our power to confirm the pleasing account given in our last of an action in the Jerseys this day week. There was a Small engagement with a Forrageing party but So insignificant in its consequences that the General barely mentions it in a few lines to Mr Morris. He says the Enemy when they do stir out come in such large bodies that our people cannot manage them.<sup>1</sup>

You have herewith Sundry dispatches received Since our last, a letter from Messrs. Walton & Taylor and with it a Copy of the Indian Treaty if it can be got in time from the Council of Safety.<sup>2</sup> The Belts we keep to be sent by the first express. We have the Honor to remain Sir &c.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's letter to Morris is not in the Fitzpatrick edition of his writings, but see his February 14 letter to Hancock in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:145-46, as well as Executive Committee to Hancock, February 13, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:130.



## John Hancock to Samuel Langdon

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feb. 15-1777

I am honoured by a letter from the Revd. Mr President Langdon by Mr Hall, of December 16 which I received Feb. 7 [ . . . ] Inclosing several resolutions of the Hon. Board of Overseers, with the subsequent votes of the Corporation of Harvard College, of which I was *once* respected as a member.<sup>1</sup> I am much obliged to the President for the compliment in the latter part of his letter, as to my publick conduct unconnected with the college, but in justice to my own reputation, as interested and concerned in the government of that society, and being intrusted with their funds by their unsolicited and unexpected appointment, I am constrained to say that the other parts of the President's letter as also of his letter of April 30th, 1776,<sup>2</sup> with the votes of the Board of Overseers and the votes of the corporation consequent thereupon, carry such a severe and unmerited censure on me, that I think I am justified in requesting an explanation. I am in the first place called upon by the President for an *immediate compliance* with the resolves of the overseers. The overseers require a delivery of all papers, obligations, etc, to such person as the corporation shall appoint for that purpose, and adjourn till the first Wednesday in Jany. for the purpose of receiving and examining my accounts, with a dependence that by that time those accounts would be laid before them. The corporation in consequence appoint Mr. Hall to proceed *wherever Mr. Hancock may be* and receive the bonds, etc. Have I ever, Gentlemen, refused to comply with the requisitions of the overseers or have I not ever paid an implicit obedience to all their requests? The time to which the overseers adjourned for the liquidation of my accounts was elapsed before I received the summons by Mr. Hall, and next, the direction to Mr. Hall to proceed *wherever Mr Hancock may be*, these circumstances carry an implication, highly disreputable to me. Surely I did not run away with the Property of the College, No Gentlemen, I served it. I could have wished that the particular situation of my affairs & my own constant attention to the business of my Department had prevent so sudden an application at least that I should not have been so suddenly dismissed without even the privilege of resigning, If I had been disposed to resign. I received a letter in October from Mr. Bowdoin on this subject, and wrote him an answer, inclosed to Mr Bant, acquainting him that I would send the papers as soon as possible,<sup>3</sup> the different turn to our affairs after that, and the danger of travelling, with the additional business in Congress in consequence of the retreat of our Army, prevented my attention to that business: since that letter I have heard nothing, till Mr. Hall's arrivall, and altho' I have been obliged to improve nights for the purpose, I have complied with the requisition and have sent down the bonds to my regular attorney Mr William Bant in Boston, a gentleman for whose integrity, capacity and honour, I will be answerable. I have

sent him also a list of the bonds as examined by Mr. Hall, my secretary & myself. Mr. Bant will wait on you at such time & place as you shall please to appoint for the examination and reception of the bonds, if found right you will please to give him duplicate receipts for each bond with the sum and amount of the whole, unless you should choose to continue them in his hands to follow your direction, he acting under me in the appointment you made of me for the office, but if you see fit to dismiss me, for I cannot resign under the present circumstances, you will of course receive the bonds, and give him a receipt, in which case I shall employ some more nights in completing my accounts & forwarding it to Mr Bant, that he may make a final settlement. I think it proper now to mention to you, that I have no demand upon you, neither shall I make any for the salary as Treasurer, or any expense I have been at, & further to inform you that I have given directions to Mr. Bant to pay every Iota of expense that shall arise in consequence of Mr. Halls journey; I have paid him here, his whole expense from his leaving you to this day, & Mr. Bant has my orders to pay the remainder, and I have asked Mr. Hall to exhibit his accounts to Mr. Bant for payment, as I cannot suffer it to be said that the College *lost* one farthing by me, tho' it *gain* nothing by me. I have been happy in the company of Mr. Hall, my situation and the obligation I am under to be very assiduous in my attention to the business & calls of my department, must apologize to him that I have not been more attentive to him, and must apologize to you that I have not more early dispatched him. I have ever had a most sincere regard for the seminary in which you preside, I will never prejudice it, but unless permitted by an explanation, I shall never trouble it.

I have the honour to be with sentiments of esteem, Gentlemen, Your  
 〈*injured*〉 most obed. & hum Set. J.H.

[P.S.] I am apt to think there are a few more Bonds in another package of papers which I will not now detain Mr Hall for, as I shall send them to Mr Bant, by a careful hand who goes in a few days. I have never unpacked any of the papers until since Mr. Halls arrival.

Tr (MH-Ar). Addressed: "Revd. the President & Hon. Gentlemen of the Corporation of Harvard College."

<sup>1</sup> Hancock, who became Harvard treasurer in 1773, had by 1775 become embroiled in a controversy with the corporation of Harvard College. Despite Hancock's deep involvement in the political and military resistance to Britain, the Harvard Corporation called for an accounting of the treasurer's records in April 1775, but when Hancock fled Concord just ahead of the British troops, he carried the records with him to Worcester, Mass., and ultimately to Philadelphia.

In March 1776 Harvard president Samuel Langdon complained to Hancock that without the treasury records the college, then operating in Concord, could neither receive money nor pay its expenses; and receiving no reply, Langdon on April 18 renewed the request for the records. Hancock finally responded on May 13, 1776: "I duly Rec'd your two Letters, and should much sooner have Return'd an Answer, but my constant Attention to the Business of my particular

Department which has Engag'd my whole time must Apologize for me. The Matters of the College I am sensible ought to be attended to, and should have been sooner by me, but from the Confus'd state of our Province I concluded there was no possibility of drawing the Attention of individuals to any particular Business. I have however directed young Mr Winthrop to proceed from hence, & to Return here as soon as possible, and bring with him all my Books & papers, for which purpose I this morning Sent off a light Waggon, as soon as I Receive them & can properly Arrange them, you shall hear fully from me on the Subject, and shall be Glad to know whether it would be most Eligible & agreeable to you & the Corporation, for me to Appoint Mr William Winthrop to Act for me, or for me to Resign, tho' the latter I should not be induc'd to do unless by a Signification of your pleasure, in which case you will Appoint one in my place as early as you think necessary. My attachment to the College is such that nothing but necessity would divert my Attention from it, that will not however be hastened by me. On this Subject I shall be glad to be favour'd with your Sentiments. I had made a proposition to Congress for Leave of Absence in order to have proceeded to Boston, which was under Consideration, when I Rec'd by Express the melancholy News of the sudden Death of my Dear Aunt, which Suspended the Execution of my Plan, and now Business crouds so fast upon Congress that I cannot with propriety at present think of Leaving Congress." Treasurer's Papers, MH-Ar.

In his response to Hancock, Langdon explained that although the Harvard Corporation "rejoiced" that Hancock had been chosen for high government duties, they still needed the treasurer's records and an active treasurer. But he went on to concede that "we have nothing to object to your proposal of appointing Mr. William Winthrop to act for you, until you can determine whether it will be consistent with your high public employment to continue in the charge of our treasury." Other duties continued to overwhelm Hancock, and at length the corporation voted in November 1776 to send Stephen Hall, a Harvard tutor, to collect the treasurer's papers. Hall finally caught up with the president of Congress in Baltimore, and Hancock wrote this February 15 letter in reaction to Hall's arrival. The Harvard Corporation subsequently voted in March 1777 "that it is highly expedient that another Treasurer, who shall constantly reside within this State, be elected in the stead and place of Mr. Hancock," and a few months later elected Ebenezer Storer to the post. Notwithstanding this attempt to clear up the treasurer's records and subsequent efforts led by the Rev. William Gordon to have the college sue Hancock, Hancock's accounts with Harvard remained unbalanced at his death in 1793.

For further discussions of this episode and the principal correspondence between Hancock and Langdon to 1777, see Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*, 12:211, 13:437-45; Herbert S. Allan, *John Hancock, Patriot in Purple* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), pp. 266-68; Josiah Quincy, *The History of Harvard University*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: John Owen Publisher, 1840), 2:509-22; and Donald J. Proctor, "John Hancock: New Sounding on an Old Barrel," *Journal of American History* 64 (December 1977): 652-77.

<sup>2</sup> This letter to Hancock was actually dated May 30, 1776. See Quincy, *Harvard University*, 2:515.

<sup>3</sup> Hancock's letter to James Bowdoin has not been found, but according to Langdon, Bowdoin read it to the Harvard Corporation on October 29, 1776. Langdon included the following "extract" in his April 22 reply to Hancock. "That you had been prevented from making a particular reply to his favor, respecting the College accounts, by a close attention to business of a most interesting nature; which, you say, I am confident will be admitted as my apology. I shall immediately, even if I encroach upon the hours allotted for sleep, set about adjusting these accounts, and forward them as early as possible; but I fear I shall not have them with you by the



early day you mention, though my exertions shall not be wanting to accomplish it; they shall, however, be transmitted as soon as possible." Quincy, *Harvard University*, 2:518.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Assembly

Honble Gentlemen,

Baltim Febry. 15th. 1777

The Honour confer'd upon me by Appointing me one of your Delegates in the American Congress, as it is a very distinguished one, so it has always been cherish'd by me with the greatest Satisfaction. I am led therefore by Duty and Inclination to Discharge the Trust Reposed in me, untill the Period Arrives when it will Devolve into the hands of those who gave it. But there are some Circumstances which Oblige me to Solicit your Indulgence in permitting me to Return to Boston for a short time.<sup>1</sup>

It cannot be unknown to you, Gentlemen, that very soon after my Appointment to a Seat in Congress, I had the honour of being call'd to preside in that Assembly, in which Department I have endeavour'd to Execute the Arduous and extensive Business Annexed to it, in the most faithfull manner, and to the best of my Abilities, but whether with Reputation or not, my American Brethren, as they must finally Determine, to them I willingly submit my Conduct. This much however I may Assert, that I have spared neither Attention or Labour to Satisfy the wishes of Congress; and so unremitted has been my Application to the Duties of the Chair since my Appointment to it, that I have never been Absent a single hour.

Such close Confinement both in Congress, and out of it, having at length considerably impair'd my Health, and feeling it decline every Day, I am induc'd to Ask your Consent to Visit my Native Country, with a view to spend a few Weeks, in hopes the Benefit of the Ride, and Relaxation from Business will Restore my Constitution and Relieve my complaints.

Should you afterwards think my Services in Congress will Contribute to the Interest of America, or the State of Massachusetts Bay, I shall again cheerfully Return to my Duty, having Determin'd that no Difficulties or Fatigues, shall Deter me from contributing all in my power to save the Liberties of America, and to establish them on the firmest foundation, for this purpose only I wish to Live, & for this I am willing to Die.

I have the Honour to be with every Sentiment that Respect & Esteem can Inspire, Hon'ble Gentlemen, Your most Obedt huml Servt.

John Hancock

[P.S.] I will not abuse your Indulgence of Leave; if there is a real necessity of my Returng. in point of Health I shall improve it, not else.

RC (M-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> President Hancock did not leave Congress until October 31, 1777. *JCC* 9:852-53.



## William Hooper to Joseph Hewes

Dear Joseph

Halifax Monday February 15. 1777

Here I arrived late yesterday after a most fatiguing Journey all the way on Horseback from Baltimore hither. An unremitting attendance upon congress all day and upon committees on Evenings during the solitary representation of North Carolina by degrees impaired my accustomed stock of health and at length brought on a fever which for several days baffled the Skill of Doctor Wirzinthale and the power of medicine. It had a crisis which proved fortunate, I took the advantage of an Intermission and resumed my seat in Congress & Relapse was the Consequence & I had very nearly measured my length under Ground in that worst of all terrestrial places, a situation bad as it is yet preferable to being above it long in that wretched place. I have not yet recovered, I was broiling in a fever all last night & I can scarce muster strength to get on horseback tho I propose to go on this day.

Burke came to my relief on Saturday the first day of February and your express delivered me your packet about two hours before Burke appeared. Your Express with the fatigue of his Journey and from other causes found himself much indisposed and from this and his apprehension of the Small pox was averse to proceeding to Philadelphia. Fortunately, the next morning two congress expresses set off, one for Philadelphia to return the next Saturday—the other for Boston to return as soon as might be. Your letters for Philad I gave to the former & wrote R Morris who was there & your Brother to dispatch answers by the return Express under Cover to Mr Hancock for you. Your Letter to the Governour of Mass'tts went by the Boston express. I gave directions to Mushraw to call upon Mr Hancock on Saturday for any letters which might come to him for you & if any were not arrived to wait till they did & then proceed immediately to Edenton. I apprized Mr Hancock of this measure so that no mistake can occur in the Conduct of it. Your letter to the President &c were layed before Congress, a Committee at my request appointed, & by Mushraw as soon afterwards in a letter by Burke you will know the Result.<sup>1</sup>

Freeman Payne whom you mention as the owner of the Privateer is a fellow who was employed in Rh. Island by the State of South Carolina to recruit Sailors. They intrusted him with a Sum of money which he applied to his own uses in the purchase of a privateer. He has preyed upon all the World & is said now to be worth 30,000£ the fruits of his pious labours. I prevailed upon the N Eng. delegates to write long ago to Boston; as yet they can hear nothing of the arrival of the Privateer or his plunder.

The North Carolina Regiments as well the 6 in So Carolina as the three new ones here are ordered to join G Washn. as soon as it can be effected.<sup>2</sup> He is distressed for want of men, has not I fear 7000 & many of those are militia when the Enemy are 10,000 Strong & are prevented attacking him only from want of Cannon.

A Col Buckners Cowardice prevented our getting possession of 3 Rgts of the Enemy & perhaps 100 Waggon loaded with provisions. His Lieut Col Josiah Parker fought like a Hero, killed the Col Command[an]t of the Enemy & the second Col & would have totally routed them if Buckner had come up to his assistance with 400 Men which he had with him while Parker maintained the unequal conflict with 200 agt the whole force of the Enemy. Buckner ran off it is said, He is of Virginia, is under Arrest & I think will have the honor of dying by a Bullet tho not in the Bed of Honor.<sup>3</sup>

The French begin to shew their teeth. They have spared us 200 brass Cannon, 30,000 Musquets, 100 Ton of powder; Salt petre & 1/2 Million of livres. Genl Coudray is coming out with several of the French Nobility. Dean (entre nous) says if We hold out this Summer, France must declare for us in the fall. I inclose you George's Speech. See he trembles for his Kingdom—but I can no more. You may shew this to my friends Johnston, Iredell & Smith to whom give my love. If they & you can read it you have the Advantage of your affectionate,

Wm Hooper

[P.S.] I furnished your express Mushraw with 10£ proc. or 25 Cont dollars, remember it in your settle with him. Below is the Copy of a Resolve<sup>4</sup> which concerns Mr Johnston, the Govs Warrant should be sent immediately & the board of War will send on the Money.

I forget to tell you that Fras. Nash was made a Brig. Genl & is to go to the Northward.<sup>5</sup>

Write me to Wilmington immediately. I will send you the Resolve as to our Troops as soon as I can get any one to copy it. I am too sick to do it myself.

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:86. For a discussion of congressional reaction to the seizure of Hewes' brigantine *Joseph* by a Massachusetts privateer, see Hooper to Hewes, January 1, 1777, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:90.

<sup>3</sup> Washington discussed the case of Col. Mordecai Buckner of the Sixth Virginia Regiment in his January 26 letter to John Hancock, which was read in Congress on February 4. PCC, item 152, 3:497–503; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:63–68; and *JCC*, 7:86.

<sup>4</sup> Immediately after the next paragraph in the MS, Hooper inserted a copy of a February 5 resolve appropriating \$500,000 for the use of North Carolina. *JCC*, 7:92.

<sup>5</sup> See *JCC*, 7:90.

## Marine Committee to Nicholas Biddle

Sir

Philadelphia 15th February. 1777

I hope this will soon be delivered to you after despatched from hence as I have received directions from the Marine Committee at Baltimore to send you on a different service to that which the Orders I gave you before you left fort Island directed.<sup>1</sup>

With this you will receive Letters for William Bingham Esqr the Continental Resident at Martinico and you are immediately to proceed for that Island and deliver said Letters, the purport of them are that he should ship on board your ship, a quantity of Arms, Ammunition, Cloathing and other Stores that we suppose will be lodged there previous to your Arrival. If you find that Mr. Bingham has it in his power to comply with this requisition, you are forthwith to receive on board all such stores as he may desire and return with the utmost expedition to the Coast of America in order to get them landed in some safe place, from whence they can be transported by land to our Armies or Magazines. These supplies are exceedingly necessary for the service of the ensuing Campaign and you cannot render your Country a more essential service than by bringing them soon and safe in. Should it so happen that these expected Supplies are not arrived at Martinico or that Mr. Bingham has but A Small portion of them, you may take on board what he has and then proceed to St. Eustatia, first consulting with Mr. Bingham on the propriety of this measure. At St. Eustatia you will call on Mr Samuel Curson, Mr. Corneilus Stevenson and Mr Henricus Godet with the letters herein and if they have any of the expected stores receive them on board & should these make quantity or value sufficient return to America from thence, but should you be disapointed here also, you will then proceed to the Island Curacoa and deliver the enclosed Letter to Mr. Isaac Gouverneur; and should you find at this Island Mr John Philip Merkle of Amsterdam who will be at Mr Gouverneurs; you may consult with him and Mr. Gouverneur whether it is better to take him and his goods on board the Randolph or to ship his goods on board other fast sailing Vessels to come on the Coast under your Convoy; and do therein what shall seem best to them and yourself, but be sure to bring them Safe. Should it so happen that Mr Merkle is not at Curacoa, nor any of his goods you will then proceed to Cape Francois and deliver the Letter herewith to Mr Stephen Ceronio. If he has goods or Stores receive them on board, but failing of sufficient there you will go to the Mole St. Nicholas, deliver the Letter herewith to Mr John Dupuy, take in what he has to ship, and then make the best of your way back to the Continent.

As you command the first American frigate that has got out to sea, it is expected that you contend warmly on All necessary occasions for the honor of the American flag.

At every foreign port you enter salute their forts and waite on the Governor, General or Commander in Chief, asking the liberty of their ports for the Ships of the United States of America. Take care that your people do not molest their Trade nor Inhabitants nor in any shape disturb that good understanding we have with them.

Should you take any prizes in the West Indies that are bona fide British property within the discriptions of Prizes as laid [down] by Congress, you may send them into Martinico to the care of William Bingham Esqr.—to St. Eustatia to the care of Saml. Curson junr. Esqr.—at Cura-coa to Mr Gouverneur—at the Cape Francois to Mr Ceronio, at St. Nicholas Mole to Mr John Dupuy, observing that if any part of the Cargoes suit the consumption of the West Indies, and not consisting in such articles as are wanted here, the Agents of the Prizes may make sale of all such goods and apply the Neat proceeds to the purchase of such supplies as we are in want of, and we will pay here that part of the amount that appertains to you, your officers and Crew, but the Ships must be sent to some port in these States for Condemnation with a Compleat Inventory of what has been taken out, any Prize you take that you think may be disputed or appealed for, must be sent for the States without breaking bulk. The Agents at each place will make the necessary supplies for the charges and expences of your Ship, but you are not to pay any Custom House fees or duties any where. You must encourage as many Seamen as possible to enter on board your Ship at every port you enter and from every prize you take. As the British Men of War on the West India stations are not often well manned, it would give great eclat to our Naval service if you can make prize of one or more of them, and if so you will do well to tempt some of their best Warrant officers such as Boatswains, Gunners, Quarter Masters and their several mates to enter our service, for we would wish you to bring both these and plenty of Common Sailors home to assist in Manning our other Ships of war. When your errand to the West Indies is compleated, you'l observe it is mentioned already that you are to return to some safe port in these United States of America. The uncertainty of the fate of war makes us cautious of saying positively which shall be the best port. There is little doubt but this will be the most convenient to receive the Stores at, being most Centrical and probably not very distant from the Scenes of Action, and as you are well enabled to defend yourself against most single ships, and capable we hope of out-sailing any of the enemies it appears that you might venture to call at Cape Henlopen or Cape May for intelligence without incurring the charge of rashness, and we will endeavour to keep out some small Cruizers about the time you are expected to give you information. To these you'l shew the Signals mentioned in your letter of the 6th instant to me but least you should forget to keep a Copy I shall repeat that "you are to be known to small Cruizers by a White Jack at the fore top mast head and a pendant over it." Shew this same Signal to the Light House and we will send down



orders there to answer it by a White sheet if All is well, but to hoist English Colors if you are in danger, and as it is probable some more of the Continental frigates may be out and Cruizing on the Coast, I shall enclose you herein some Signals by which Continental frigates may be known to each other by day or by night, as Copies shall be furnished to each of the Captains and you will duely observe your part of them. I need not repeat what has been said in your former Instructions respecting the care of the Randolph, treatment of your men and prisoners &c &c but wishing you honor and Success, I am Sir, Your obedt hble servant,

Robt Morris V. P.

P.S. If you do your business at Martinico you may bring back the Letters for Messrs. Curson, Godet, Stevenson, Gouverneur, Ceronio & Dupuy & return them to,

R M

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> See Marine Committee to Biddle, January 30, 1777.

## Marine Committee to Elisha Warner

Sir <sup>1</sup>

February 15th. 1777

I send down to you by the Muskeito sundry Packets for Captain Biddle of the Randolph frigate which is now a Cruizing on the Coast. You are to proceed down the Bay directly send on shore to the Light House and tell the Keeper of it whenever he discovers a frigate in the offing whilst you are in sight of the Light House to hoist or shew a large white sheet on sight of which the Randolph will stand in, another will not know what it means. You will keep Cruizing about the Capes in sight of the Light House until you deliver these despatches to Captain Biddle and take care every night to get under the Land to prevent being cut off by the enemy. When you see any frigate hoist your Continental Colours and you will know the Randolph by a White Jack at the fore top mast head and a Pendant over it, dont trust too near until you discover this Signal, and when you see it you will know the Randolph. Soon as you have delivered these despatches to Captain Biddle come up to the Cheveaux Defrize or some place where you can keep your men on board and inform me of your return. I am Sir, Your very hble servant,

Robt. Morris V. P.

P. S. These despatches are of great consequence and must be delivered Captain Biddle soon as possible, and if any unfortunate accident befalls you they must be Sunk for the enemy must not have them on any acct.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book)

<sup>1</sup> Warner was captain of the Continental sloop *Fly*.

## Lewis Morris to John Jay

Dear Sir

Phia Februy 15th 1777

I yesterday received your Letter of the 3d instant.<sup>1</sup> When I came to this place, Bob Morris told me he had wrote very pressing to Congress to come here, and from the necessity of affairs at present he had not the least doubt but that they would come, and therefore advised me not to set off untill he got an answer to his Letter, which last night was not come. As Soon as it does, if they should be determined not to remove I shall immediately Set out for Baltimore.<sup>2</sup> Until then it will not be in my power to write you fully relative to Doctr Morgan, but whenever it is you may rest assured I shall do it. Some time ago I Saw Coll Livingston at Sussex. He Says that the Leut Coll is vacant in his Regt, and expressed a desire that Lewis or Jacob should be appointed, however the Committee are the best Judges, and I am sure if they can consistent with their duty they will. My son Jacob at the request of Mr West, begs of me to write to you for your interest in bringing about an exchange of James Jancey Junr for Major West, he is a good Officer, and I think the exchange must be in our favor; Morris has wrote you on this Subject.<sup>3</sup> The great resort of People to this Place has raised the Markets to a most enormous price, Beef at 1/ to 1/6, mutton 1/ to 1/6, Turkes from 10/ to 15/, Ducks 6/ to 8/, fowls 3/ to 4/. I had the pleasure a few nights ago to Spend the evening with Governor Livingston. We were very merry, as he was in high Spirits. He is now at a place called Haddenfield with his Assembly, it is within Six Miles of this Town. Mrs Morris joins me in our best regards to Mrs Jay and all friends at FishKill. Believe me Dr Sir, yours Most Sincerely,

Lewis Morris

RC (NNC).

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in Jay, *Papers* (Morris), 1:369.

<sup>2</sup> According to his later account with the state of New York, Morris received "£62.8.0" for "attendance at Congress from the 21 of Februy 1777 to the 1st of April, 39 days at 4 Dollars per Day," another "£70.0.0" for attending Congress "from 1st of April to the 25th at 7 dollars" a day, and "£12.16.0" for "going to Congress 8 days [at] 4 dollars per day." Emmet Collection, NN.

<sup>3</sup> See Robert Morris to Jay, February 4, 1777.

## Robert Morris to Benjamin Rush

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 15th. 1777

I am favoured with your letters of the 8th & 11th Inst. & am very sorry the Congress shou'd persist in an error, that experience shews plainly to be such. I was at the pains to get two Gentn going to Boston with a large

Sum of Money to deposite it in our loan Office & take Certificates bearing four per Cent interest rather than the money. To induce them to do this I told them none had been yet sent to the Eastern States & they wou'd readily obtain the money for these Notes as they wanted it, but to guard against disapointments I gave them letters to the Continental agents requesting their assistance if necessary & telling them the Gentlemen must not be disapointed because they had taken this step to promote the public Service & under my assurance that they shoud not suffer by it. Mr Bradford writes me from Boston that it will be extreemly difficult to obtain money for those notes (about 60000 Dollars) because the Treasurer of that State is taking in all the money he can get & giving Treasury Notes for it at six per Cent. Here the People who are willing the Continent shou'd have their money refuse it possitively because they cannot afford to reduce their income, especially as the price of living is more than doubled, in short if the Congress do not embrace this measure at once they are undone, every department of Public business is in want of money, they cannot make it fast enough & if they will not borrow on the terms other People do, what must follow. When four per Cent was agreed on I was in favour of it, only, because I thought the immense sum in Circulation wou'd oblige the great holders of it to lodge it in the Public Funds and be glad to get it there, but now that experience shews us our Credit is not well established, that our money is greatly depreciated, and at the same time our Necessitys are daily encreasing, I wonder upon what principle it is that any Gentleman can expect a supply by loan equal to those necessitys. I am told the Southern States object & think they shall pay the Interest & the others receive it, but this is a phantom, whilst they Continue to raise such Valuable Commodities as Indico, Rice & Tobacco, they will Command their share of the Riches of the Continent and discharge their debts with more facility than their Neighbours. I cannot urge further than I have already done in the public letters from the Committee, the return of Congress to this City lest we be suspected of motives that I treat with great Contempt. Philadelphia Can do as well without as with the Congress, but I am Confident they cannot do as well out of as in it. For my own part I mean in all my Conduct to promote the general Interest of America & lay onside local attachments except in such instances as they become a duty. My inclination prompts me to decline a public Station, but being called on I cannot gratify myself, when the consequence will be to deserve blame from the worthy part of those that are embarked with me in this Cause & you may depend I will not spare my exertions to Serve & Save my Country. I am Dear Sir, Your Obedt hble servt,

Robt Morris

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore 15th Feby 1777

My last <sup>1</sup> accompanied the money from the Marine Committee viz 42,000 dollars, but as this goes by Express to Boston it may come first to hand. The last letter I rec'd from you was 27th Decr.

There are still a number of the enemy's ships in Chesapeake Bay though some vessels do get past them both inward & outward bound and some have fallen into their hands. It will be prudent to order the vessels you send this way to call in at some of the inlets between Cape Henlopen and Cape Charles where they may get information of the enemy's ships. Delaware Bay is at present open, but there is no knowing how long it will be so. The Randolph is sailed and the Delaware will sail soon and the Virginia from this place in about two weeks. A ship is arrived at Philadelphia from France, but brings no public letters; but a private letter of the 9th Novr. says France and Spain are making the greatest preparation for war ever known; England is also exerting every nerve to get a formidable fleet at sea. Holland has likewise ordered 12 ships of the line to be got ready as soon as possible. These things justify an opinion that a general war is not far off. The Tyrant of Britain's speech tells us he is endeavoring to conciliate matters between Spain and Portugal so we find that dispute is not yet settled. I hope a few days will bring us important and agreeable intelligence from Europe. That I may soon have it in my power to transmit you such as will expel every anxious thought is the wish of your very sincere friend and humble Servant,

W Whipple

[P.S.] Congress begin to talk of removing to Philadelphia again. I think it probable they will do so shortly.

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## John Adams' Diary

1777 Feb. 16

Last Evening I supped with my Friends Dr. Rush and Mr. Sergeant at Mrs. Page's over the Bridge. The two Coll. Lees, Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. Adams, Mr. Gerry, Dr. Brownson, made the Company. They have a Fashion in this Town of reversing the Picture of King G. 3d, in such Families as have it. One of these Topsy Turvy Kings was hung up in the Room, where we supped, and under it were written these Lines, by Mr. Throop, as we were told.

Behold the Man who had it in his Power  
To make a Kingdom tremble and adore



Intoxicate with Folly, See his Head  
 Plac'd where the meanest of his Subjects tread  
 Like Lucifer the giddy Tyrant fell  
 He lifts his Heel to Heaven but points his Head to Hell.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:259.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Baltimore Feb. 16. 1777

A few days ago, a small Expedition was made by the Authority of this State aided by a Detachment of Continental Regulars, to suppress the Tories in the Counties of Somerset & Worcester on the Eastern Shore of Chessapeak, where they are numerous and have arisen to a great Pitch of Insolence.<sup>1</sup> We this day have a Rumour that one of their Principals, a Doctor Cheyney, is taken and we hope to hear of the Business being effectually done, very soon. In my opinion, much more is to be apprehended from the secret Machinations of these rascally People, than from the open Violence of British and Hessian Soldiers, whose Success has been in a great Measure owing to the Aid they have receivd from them. You know that the Tories in America have always acted upon one System. Their Head Quarters used to be at Boston—more lately at Philadelphia. They have continually embarrasd the publick Councils there, & afforded Intelligence, Advise and Assistance to General Howe. Their Influence is extended throughout the united States. Boston has its full share of them, and yet I do not hear that Measures have been taken to suppress them. On the Contrary, I am informd that the Citizens are grown so polite, as to treat them with Tokens of Civility & Respect. Can a Man take Fire into his Bosom, and not be burned? Your Massachusetts Tories communicate with the Enemy in Britain as well as New York. They give and receive Intelligence, from whence they early form a Judgment of their Measures. I am told they discoverd an Air of insolent Tryumph in their Countenances, and saucily enjoyd the Success of Howes Forces in Jersey before it happend. Indeed, my Friend, if Measures are not soon taken, and the most vigorous ones, to root out these pernicious Weeds, it will be in vain for America to persevere in this generous Struggle for the publick Liberty.

General Howe has declared that he intends that General Lee shall be tried by the Laws of *his* Country. So he is considerd as a Deserter from the British Army—You know the Resolution of Congress concerning this Matter. It is my opinion that Lt Colo Campbel ought immediately to be secured. He is to be detaind as one upon whom Retalliation is to be made.

Would you believe it, that after the shocking Inhumanities shown to our Countrymen in the Jerseys, plundering Houses, cruelly beating old Men, ravishing Maids, murdering Captives in cold Blood, and systematically starving Multitudes of Prisoners under his own Eye at New York, this humane General totally disavows his own winking at the Tragedy, and allows that a few Instances may have happend which are rather to be lamented.

Congress is now busy in considering on the Report of the joynt Committees of the Eastern States. A curious Debate arose on this Subject, which I have not time now to mention. I will explain it to you in my next. Adieu my Friend,

S A

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup>See Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety, February 7, and John Hancock to the Maryland Council of Safety, February 7, 1777, note 2.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 16th 1777.

My last to you was by Mr Hooper, & I suppose you have received it long before this.<sup>1</sup> I then announced my intention of troubling you every post & I now sit down in order to perform, in some part, my promise.

Of the political principles of the respective States I am not yet able to speak very clearly, for they are kept as much as possible out of view. I conjecture however, that all are under some apprehensions of combination in the Eastern States to derive to themselves every possible advantage from the present war, at the expence of the rest. I am not yet satisfied that there is any combination amongst them. I rather think that they only combine when they have one common interest, which is seldom the case, & I am sure this is not peculiar to them. On some late questions I observed they divided: one was relative to the interest to be paid on Loans, another relative to meeting of several States. In the sequel of this letter I mean to give you an abstract of the debates on these questions,<sup>2</sup> & therefore shall say no more of them here. But, sir, I am more concerned to find that Pennsylvania, Maryland, Jersey, & some others are exceedingly jealous of the states whose bounds to the westward are yet unascertained, & I am much mistaken if they do not upon all occasions endeavour to fix very extensive powers in a mere majority of Congress in order to get resolutions unfavourable to the claims of such states entered into. To be more explicit, I believe they will endeavour by degrees to make the authority of Congress very extensive, & when it shall be fully established & acknowledged, to make such a party in it as will pass resolves injurious to the rights of those States who claim to the South Seas. You will see by some

matters in the abstract of debates which I shall subjoin, that this conjecture is not quite void of foundation. I am clearly of opinion at all events that those States who, like ours, have such claims should be explicit in declaring they will give no power to their Delegates to bind them in any thing that regards their Bounds.

I am not yet able to be particular with respect to the measures intended to be pursued. We are endeavouring to forward, by every expedient, the recruiting service, & also the putting our Frigates to sea. Our greatest difficulty is in supplying the Treasury. This requires the nicest management. If we go on emitting money, the quantity in circulation so enhances the prices of things, that we shall only make more money without being able to get for it more commodities, & it will, of course destroy its own purpose. The Loan Office is at length considered as little better than new emissions, & a Tax seems the only adequate expedient. There is a plan under consideration for this purpose: when it shall be determined I will be more explicit. You will receive from the President a copy of some transactions in the New England Governments, together with the Resolutions of Congress relative thereto. You will perceive that the intention of sending them to the different States is to suggest to them to fall on methods something similar, if they see it proper & necessary. Tho' no States are more in need of such regulations than where the armies march through, yet they opposed it, under the pretence that regulating prices would be impracticable; but a majority of Congress were of opinion that it might be rendered so far effectual as to prevent engrossers, & forestallers, & speculators, who purchased in hopes of a rising price, & thereby rendered necessary articles very scarce, & difficult to be obtained. For my thoughts on this subject, I will refer you to the abstract of debates, that is so far as regards our own State. I indeed have no great opinion of an attempt to regulate prices in a country where the holders are under no necessity of selling; but knowing our own State was not much interested in this business, I voted for it, in order to damp the practice of speculative monopoly which prevails in all the Northern States. You will see in the abstract my reasons for not approving it in ours. I really feel myself much displeased at the disregard Virginia shewed to our interest in this matter, & I believe, were I a member of your assembly I should move that she might be desired to avow or disavow the conduct of her Delegates in Congress. But this I need not urge to you, who are so good a judge of her interest, so jealous of her honour, & so careful to maintain her rights.

We have just received some very agreeable intelligence from the army, but I expect it will be in the paper before I can close this letter; If not I will procure abstracts & enclose them to you. There are some Tory disturbances on the Eastern Shore of this State, & the Civil Power do not seem to proceed with sufficient vigour against them. There *[are]* some

Troops however sent against them, & I suppose my next will contain something final relative to them. I take abstracts of all the important debates in Congress, principally with a view of transmitting them to you. I think it right that my country should know how I give her voice, & upon what principles I determine for her. If I am right her approbation will not only determine me, but others also to proceed with firmness. If I am mistaken she, only, can correct me, & by correcting me inform others more fully of their duty. I doubt not the candor of my countrymen, they will believe I act for them to the best of my judgment, & where that judgment errs I am desirous it should be better instructed by them, or if they find it defective & unfit for their service, 'tis surely right they should have an opportunity of substituting a better in so important a trust.

The intelligence above mentioned is in the paper; it is that under the Philadelphia head, February the 15th, but I am sorry to tell you it is contradicted by later accounts. We have received authentic intelligence from London that Chesapeake Bay is next campaign to be the seat of war, & the enemy mean to land first on the Eastern Shore. The Tories in Somerset & Worcester are broken, & the persons who chiefly excited them are taken prisoners. The Congress have resolved to adjourn on Tuesday from this town to Philadelphia, to sit there on the Tuesday following.<sup>3</sup>

I have the honour to be, Your Excellency's most obed. serv't,

Thos. Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See Burke to Caswell, February 4, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See Burke's Notes of Debates, February 8, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> This decision was entered in the journals of Congress on February 17. See *JCC*, 7:127, 157, 164.

## John Hancock to Robert Treat Paine

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 16th. 1777

By the above resolve you will perceive Congress have desired you to agree wth. Colo. Gridley for forty 8 Inch Howitzers upon reasonable terms.<sup>1</sup> I must beg your attention to it, cannot enlarge at this time being much hurried, shall write you more fully by Express. I am, your most Obed Hb Servt.

John Hancock Prest.

[P.S.] I Sent your Trunk by a Waggon with Money, which went off 11th Inst.

RC (MHi). In a clerical hand, with signature and postscript by Hancock. Addressed: "To The Honble Robert Treat Paine Esqr., Chairman of the Come. for Procurg Cannon, at Boston or Taunton."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:119.



## Marine Committee to John Nicholson

Sir.<sup>1</sup> Feby. 16th 1777

As the enemies ships and the ice have detained you in Delaware until this time when the Marine Committee are in Baltimore I only think it necessary to add to these orders that the first of April limited for your return need not be regarded if the public service will be benefitted by your longer detention, but tell Mr. Bingham if he has any public stores to send us, the receipt of them is of more consequence than Cruizing. I am Sir,  
Your hble servant, Robert Morris V. P.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Nicholson was captain of the Continental sloop *Hornet*.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham

Dear Sir Philadelphia Feby. 16th. 1777

I wrote you a few lines the 12th Inst. by Mr Sargentons Sloop. That Vessell happened to arrive here in the midst of our fright when I advised Mr Blaquiere to send her down to Wilmington from whence the Cargo might be sent over Land to Baltimore or Lancaster in case of need he did so, and remained there untill our Panic ceased and the Enemy were driven back to Brunswick. He then came up here again & finding me so exceedingly engaged that I could not possibly pay due attention to his business, he got the Assistance of Mr Daymon and they have transacted it.

When you went away I thot. my time woud not be so engrossed but that I might as usual manage Commission business, however I see it is impossible especially with such troublesome people as French SuperCar-goes &c. Therefore I now request you will not give yourself the trouble to solicit any Coms. business for me as I chuse to decline it unless what I do for you and such persons as former Connections oblige me to, indeed Coms. are not worth accepting when a person can employ his spare time to so much greater Advantage as I can now. I must also request you to spare me all you can in the Introduction of French Officers to me, I do not speak their Language and being so exceedingly employed as I am the time they take from me in Visits & Applications can very ill be spared and is really very troublesome to me. Coud I speak the Language & had spare time it woud be a pleasure but it is now too much the reverse. I know very well you cannot avoid it sometimes and I shall always pay attention to them when you do recommend. Hitherto I have got all of them Appointments but really they are flocking over in such Numbers from every Port & by every Ship that I dont know what we shall do with them (all this in Confidence) and when you recommend any of them to the Secret Com-

mittee of Correspondence dont put those letters under my Cover but given them directed to the Committee or else they fasten on me at once. In this way each member will have his Chance for the Trouble. I have rendered Mr Blaquire all the assistance he wanted and when the other Sloop arrives will procure her a Commission if requested, I shall now proceed to answer such parts of your several letters as require it.

Your letter of the 31st October covered Invoice & bill of Loading for an Adventure per the Sloop Molly, Capt. Conway, Consigned to Messrs. Jenifer & Hooe which we approved of in a former letter and have now the pleasure to enclose herein a Copy of the Account Sales and we place to your Credit £1354.4.3 this Cury for your half Net Proceeds, Messrs. Jenifer & Hooe have also requested us to Credit you for some other Sums which shall be mentd. by & by. I never saw Monsr. Nesmoi mentioned in your letter of 21 Octr. and you may suppose from what I have already said that I am not sorry to lose these Commissions.

By Mistake we charged Coms. on our joint Adv. by the Esperance, Capt. Prejent, which is rectified by Crediting you £20.0.6 this Cury. as your draft of the 3d Decr. in favor of Messrs. Jos. Russell & Sons was made for the purchase of a Brig. & Cargo on our joint Account. I have Charged your account current here £391.10.0 this Cury. for one half the Amount and the other half is charged in our Martinico Account with you 8250 Livres half the Sum you recd for said draft. Your Bill of the 31 Octr to Aaron Lopez for 1680 Dollars is charged to your account current in £630 this Curry. being drawn on your own account, your draft of 6th Novr. in favor of Capt. Young being drawn on our joint Account I charge you in the Martinico Account Livres 43,570.17.6 being half of what you recd. for it and in your account current here £1987.6.5 this Cury. being half the Amot. of what it amounts to here Your Draft to Mrs. Abigail Cowell is placed to your account current as you desire £80.12.6 this Cury. You may depend that all your drafts on us shall be paid and I woud have you draw for our joint Account whenever you can Crediting half in Martinico & half in Philadelphia Account.

Your draft in favor of Vanbibber & Crocket is also placed to your own account as you desire in £255 this Cury. I have closed the Sales of Goods per the Independence, Capt Young, & Credit you £1477.11 this Cury. for your half Net Proceeds and shall try to settle the Sales of Goods by the Reprisal & Sachim if I can to send by this Conveyance. I will also send you a Sketch of the Martinique & Philada. account current as they now stand on our Books in order that you may compare them with yours & point out any Errors or Omissions. I am sorry you did not send forward the Bills for £1000 Stg. to Messrs. Geo. Clifford & Teysett of Amsterdam as I find they woud be very useful to me there and I hope you have been able to make out very well for Funds as I find your little Privateer has taken a

Guinea Man with 353 Slaves as I am informed here, however if you have made Use of the Bills you must charge them to the Committee here as you propose.

You will find the Adventure by the Sachem the most profitable by far and the Medicines sold very high indeed I think\* the Adventure to Charles Town will answer finely if it arrives safe there & back again of which there is a good Chance and you will do well to keep the Vessel continually running in that Service. I am sorry to inform you the Sloop Morris, Capt. Willson, is taken by the Men of War in Chesapeak Bay and of course the 141 bbls of Mr. Bealls Powder is lost, the Maryland Sloop with 121 1/2 bbls got safe, the Men of War going from hence to Chesapeak Bay will be the Means of losing us many Vessells as they will all think of pushing in there instead of this place in consequence of the Reports you had that this City was in the Hands of the Enemy &c. However the Virginians have sent out Boats to Cruize outside of the Enemy's Ships to give Notice to inward bound Vessells and some to the West Indies to let you know the Change of circumstances.

I have wrote to Mr J H Norton of Wmsburgh to ship you a quantity of Tobo. on account of the concerned in Mr Beall's Adventure sufficient to pay all the charges & expences on it and the same to Mr Stephenson in St. Eustatia we hope we may be more fortunate with the rest than with that by the Morris. The Invoice of Goods Consd. me by the Sachem are not yet sold they soon shall be and a Bill remitted for the Net Proceeds but the Exchange is enormously high.

If you Charter any French Vessels to come here, Molasses, Rum, Coffee, Sugar & all West India Produce are enormously dear. We have not recd. any letters for Capt. Cowell when any come they shall be forwarded immedy. should you send any Prizes here I shall do the needful & be glad to see them. I observe you have parted with 1/3d of the Edenton Brig to Mr Webb which is well and I will write to him at Edenton confirming him your plan except that instead of going with the Tobo. to Dantzic I shall recommend his stopping at Marstrandt, a Free Port in Sweden. He can there look about him and find out the best Market and instead of settling in Dantzic he had probably better fix in this place as more convenient. He can have access to all the best Markets in that part of the World either to buy or sell and in case of a French War may Charter Swedish Ships to carry Goods to St. Eustatia or Danish to St. Croix or as you say to St Lucia. The Coms. on the Brigts Voyage must be given to Messrs. Hewes & Smith for Mr Webb did not buy a Cargo for her altho he might sell what he brings for No. Carolina Currency which is in bad Credit among themselves.

I observe the Cornelia & Molly's flour would be a dull Sale, this Article will be very scarce in America. Our last Crop of wheat was the worst ever

known and the Consumption of our Army with the destruction made by both Armies is immense, Common flour is 22/6, Supr fine 27/6. You will observe I was guided by Mr Prejent, in sending the Esperance to Guadeloupe & to Bassaterre, if he does but send that Ship back with a Cargo of Molasses and she gets in we shall do great things indeed. I thank you for the Intelligence respecting the Charming Peggy, Capt Cunningham, in which I am deeply Interested and had given it up for lost. If you do not send us the Molasses by the Cornelia & Molly you ruin us; 100 hhd's of that Article at this time is worth £10,000; we look for that Brig & Mr. Meade's Ship every hour. That letter of Mr Braxton's is a very unfortunate one and I fear poor Merkle may suffer by it. I cannot think what the Devil carried Meredith to Guadaloupe. If you can do us any service in that Affair I shall be very thankful for it and so will Mr Braxton whom Fortune has persecuted lately with unrelenting Cruelty. He has had a very noble House burnt by Accident with very valuable Furniture &c. I am very sensible how necessary it is you should be well supported with remittances and as desirous of sending as you are of receiving them, indeed I fear you may have been distressed but at the same time it has not been in our power to do what we wished, you must be sensible that with a River full of Ice, our Bay full of Men of War & Gen Howe at our Gates, would not admit of the usual attention to business or the same facility in doing it, but I now hope to make you a little easier on this Subject after awhile at least perhaps Mr Prejent may have contributed to procure you Funds before this time.

I expect before this reaches you will have recd £1000 Stg. Value in Goods from Mr Schweighauser in Nantes probably some from Mr Delap in Bourdeaux, Mr Limozin of Havre de Grace & perhaps from Mr John Ross or Mr Deane, in short if you have, this Opportunity & the Independence will afford good Opportunities to bring a part of them here others will also present and if we have but Luck on our side much Money will be made if any Medicines &c have arrived from Mr Cathalante hurry them here among the first for they will be much wanted by the Publick.

The Sloop Independence carries you a Quantity of Indigo & Flour and I shall try to send you a Quantity of Rice, Tobo. &c. but we send all our Tobo. Ships to Europe direct as it answers much better there and the Voyage not more hazardous than to Martinique. I have desired Mr Inglis to send a little Schooner from the Eastern Shoar with Tobacco & Corn to your Address and to write for such Goods as will answer best in that part of the world. I am a very long time without any letter from my Brother and very uneasy at it. He was in London the last Accounts I had of him and whether he has been laid hold of by the Ministers or infatuated with the pleasures of that City I don't know, but unless you hear



from him in a very satisfactory Style dont write him any more letters or Consign him any more Goods untill I am satisfyed of my present doubts.

Mr John Ross of this place will be in France, he is known to Mr Schweighauser, Messrs. Delap &c. and is a punctual-Intelligent careful Merchant and a Correspondence between you may be useful. I am, sir, your most Obedt. servant,

Robt Morris

RC (DLC). In a clerical hand and signed by Morris.

## John Adams' Diary

Feb. 17, [1777] Monday.

Yesterday, heard Dr. Witherspoon upon redeeming Time. An excellent Sermon. I find that I understand the Dr. better, since I have heard him so much in Conversation, and in the Senate. But I perceive that his Attention to civil Affairs has slackened his Memory. It cost him more Pains than heretofore to recollect his Discourse.

Mr. H[ancock] told C.W. [Colonel Whipple?] Yesterday, that he had determined to go to Boston in April. Mrs. H. was not willing to go till May, but Mr. H. was determined upon April. Perhaps the Choice of a Governor, may come on in May. What aspiring little Creatures we are! how subtle, sagacious and judicious this Passion is! how clearly it sees its Object, how constantly it pursues it, and what wise Plans it devises for obtaining it!

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:259-60.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feb. 17. 1777

It was this Day determined, to adjourn, tomorrow Week to Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>

How, as you know my opinion always was, will repent his mad march through the Jerseys. The People of that Commonwealth, begin to raise their Spirits exceedingly, and to be firmer than ever. They are actuated by Resentment now, and Resentment coinciding with Principle is a very powerfull Motive.

I have got into the old Routine of War Office and Congress, which takes up my Time in such a manner that I can scarce write a Line. I have not Time to think, nor to speak.

There is an united States Lottery abroad. I believe you had better buy a Tickett and make a Present of it to our four sweet ones, not forgetting the other sweet one. Let us try their Luck. I hope they will be more lucky than their Papa has ever been, or ever will be.

I am as well as can be expected. How it happens I dont know nor how long it will last. My Disposition was naturally gay and chearfull, but the *<awful>* Prospects I have ever had before me, and these cruel Times will make me melancholly. I who would not hurt the Hair of the Head of any Animal, I who am always made miserable by the Misery of every sensible being, that comes to my Knowledge, am obliged to hear continual Accounts of the Barbarities, the cruel Murders in cold Blood, even by the most tormenting Ways of starving and freezing, committed by our Enemies, and continual Accounts of the Deaths and Diseases contracted by our People by their own Imprudence.

These Accounts harrow me beyond Description.

These incarnate Dæmons say in great Composure, ["that] Humanity is a Yankey Virtue. But that they [are] governed by Policy." Is there any Policy on this side of Hell, that is inconsistent with Humanity? I have no Idea of it. I know of no Policy, God is my Witness but this—Piety, Humanity and Honesty are the best Policy.

Blasphemy, Cruelty, and Villany have prevailed and may again. But they wont prevail against America, in this Contest, because I find the more of them are employed the less they succeed.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:162–63.

<sup>1</sup> Congress agreed to leave Baltimore for Philadelphia on February 25. The adjournment, however, was postponed on that day because of renewed fears of an attack on Philadelphia. On February 27 Congress did adjourn to "Wednesday next," but a quorum did not assemble in Philadelphia until March 12. See *JCC*, 7:127, 157, 164, 169; and the postscript to John Hancock to George Washington, February 25, 1777.

## John Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Baltimore Feb. 17. 1777

I have the melancholly Prospect before me, of a Congress continually changing, untill very few Faces remain that I saw in the first Congress. Not one from South Carolina—not one from North Carolina, only one from Virginia—only two from Maryland, not one from Pensylvania—Not one from New Jersey, not one from New York—only one from Connecticut, not one from Rhode Island—not one from New Hampshire and only one at present from the Massachusetts. Mr S. Adams, Mr Sherman, and Coll Richard Henry Lee, Mr Chase and Mr Paca are all that remain. The rest are dead, resigned, deserted, or cutt up into Governors &c at home.

I have the Pleasure however to see every day, that the Governments of the States are acquiring fresh Vigour, and that every Department is working itself clear of Toryism, Timidity, Duplicity and Moderation. New Jersey was never so well represented as it is now. Pennsylvania, whose assembly will maintain its Ground have the last week appointed a New Delegation, every Man of whom is as firm as a Rock.

Maryland, also, the last Week, completed their new Government, chose Mr Johnson Governor, chose a new privy Council to the Governor, every Man of whom is an honest Whigg and also chose a new Delegation in Congress, every Man of whom is equally Staunch, leaving out all who have been suspected of Trimming and hankering after the Leeks of Egypt.

This Evening too, We have an express [. . .]<sup>1</sup> with an Account of the new Deleg[. . .] who are said to be Sound.

Thus we see that our new Govern[. . .] root, and Spreading their Branches. [. . .] ing Changes have We Seen? [. . .] done?

I write you no News from the Army [. . .] as to hear from it, oftener than [. . .] rumour that gains Credit of an Engagement [. . .] Sennight, the Enemy leaving 327 dead on the Field.

Congress have this day voted to return to Philadelphia, tomorrow Week. The new Army, my dear sir, the new Army. I feel as much Pain at loosing the fine opportunity we now have of destroying the Brunswickers, as I should if a surgeon was sawing off my Limbs.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> MS torn, eight lines damaged.

## John Hancock to the Maryland and Virginia Councils of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feby. 17th. 1777.

As Congress have received Information that the Enemy are meditating a Descent upon the Coast of Chesapeak Bay the ensuing Campaign, I have it in Charge to request you will cause all the Stock of every Kind agreeably to the enclosed Resolve to be immediately removed from the Shores and the adjacent Islands, or otherwise so secured that there may be no Danger of its falling into the Hands of our Enemies—and that you take the most effectual Measures to protect those who are well affected to the Cause of America from being plundered and insulted by the Enemy.<sup>1</sup>

I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed & very hble Sert.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See JCC, 7:128. The journals mention this intelligence but not its source.

## Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee

My dear Sir,

Baltimore in Maryld. 17th Feby. 1777

The papers that go with this to yourself and the other Commissioners, are so full on the subject of news that it is not very necessary for me to say much on that subject here. There scarcely comes a post but brings us an account of some skirmish in which the enemy get beaten, and driven back (without their forage) within their lines on the hills near Brunswick, where their distress we know is very great. This has been a most fatal winter Campaign to our enemies, and unless some change happens in their favor, which cannot be seen at present, it bids fair to be abundantly more so yet. Upon the whole, notwithstanding the contemptible Ministerial boasts in their Gazettes, and in Parliament, the great force they sent here has cut a most pitiful figure indeed. In humanity they figure still worse than They do in arms. Their ravages in the Jerseys, until They were checked and driven back, beggars all description. Rapes, Murders, and devastation marked their steps in such a manner as would have disgraced the Savages of the Wilderness. The old English esteem for valor seems quite done away, and in several instances where young Americans displaid heroic spirit, and happened to fall in to their power, they have butchered them in cold blood in a most cruel and barbarous manner. They have been so frequently shameless in this way, after remonstrance has been in vain made to Gen. Howe, that the patience of our Soldiery is exhausted, and it appears as if no more prisoners will be taken, until Mr. Howe & his people learn the practice of humanity. I have received two letters from [ . . . ]<sup>1</sup> But he thinks strongly in favor of Great Britain. Was it not the most unrelenting and cruel persecution of us that forced us from her, and are we not compelled upon the clearest principles of self preservation to seek from Strangers what our kindred denied us? Must a great Continent be buried in ruin because the people of England cannot rouse from a lethargy which suffers the most abandoned of Men to trample upon the rights of human nature? It is decreed above, and we are parted Forever. Every Friendly American Nerve will now be strained to procure the active interference of France, by which, under God, the liberty of North America must be secured. Mr. Lee's steward at Green Spring (Fauntleroy) has behaved so ill during our absence, that I have removed him, and got a Manager from Hanover (a John Ellis) who I believe will do well. I purchased a quantity of Oznaburgs from Philadelphia for the people this winter, and they make their own woolen & Cotton Stuffs. I hope the time will shortly come, when we may correspond more openly, fully, and freely; in the mean time, cannot you send me by return of Captain Johnson two pounds of the best Jesuits Bark prepared? You know how necessary that medicine is for me, and I know that it is not to be had here on any terms at present. Let Mr Lee know as much of this letter as imports him.



The Congress have determined to return to Philadelphia in eight days from this time. We shall have a number of exceeding fine Frigates at Sea very soon, from 24 to 36 guns.

Farewell & send me a long letter by return of this vessel.

I am exceedingly uneasy about my poor Boys & beg of you to get them to me in the quickest and safest manner.

RC (ViU). In Lee's hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Two lines inked through and illegible.

## Marine Committee to Elisha Warner

Sir

Febry. 17th 1777

Since writing the annexed Orders <sup>1</sup> I have received advice that it is reported in the West Indies that this City is in the Hands of the enemy in consequence of which all the homeward bound Vessels are going into Chesapeake Bay where innevitably they will fall into the enemies hands, therefore as soon as you deliver these dispatches to Captain Biddle which you must first perform and then proceed in Cruize of[f] the Capes of Virginia keeping outside of the enemies men of war, and give all inward bound Vessels notice of their danger and that our Bay is clear of the enemy. Keep a Sharp look out along Shore and you will retake some of the Prizes they are sending to New York.

I am Sir, Your hble servt.

Robt. Morris V. P.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> See Marine Committee to Warner, February 15, 1777.

## Robert Morris to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 17th. 1777

The enclosed letter & its translation were put into my hands to lay them before Congress. The Writer General de Kalb was a Brigdr. Genl. all the last War in Germany, has many years commanded a French Regiment & is said to be a man of Interest at the Court of Versailles.<sup>1</sup> He speaks & writes English well, is a polite Gentn and an excellent Soldier. This Character of him is given to me by Doctr. Phile and Capt Hasenclever who are personally acquainted with him. He was in this Country in the disturbed times of the Stamp Act & was then supposed to be sent by the French Court to watch the dispute and its progress.<sup>2</sup> If you choose to encourage him Doctor Phile will transmit your pleasure.<sup>3</sup>

I have the honor to be sir, your obedt servt,<sup>4</sup> Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137).

<sup>1</sup> De Kalb's letter to Dr. Frederick Phile of Philadelphia is in PCC, item 137, appendix, fols. 167-75.

<sup>2</sup> Morris was in error about the visit of Johann Kalb, self-styled Baron de Kalb (1721-80), to America during the Stamp Act crisis, but for an account of his activities in the colonies in 1768, see Friedrich Kapp, *The Life of John Kalb, Major-General in the Revolutionary Army* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1884), pp. 52-71; and Adolf E. Zucker, *General de Kalb, Lafayette's Mentor*, University of North Carolina Studies in the Germanic Languages and Literatures no. 53 (Chapel Hill, 1966), pp. 67-79.

<sup>3</sup> On March 19 Congress declined to accept de Kalb's offer of service, but he was later offered a major general's commission in September 1777. For a discussion of the complex negotiations that eventually led to this action, see Kapp, *Life of John Kalb*, pp. 99-122; Zucker, *General de Kalb*, pp. 132-47; and *JCC*, 7:185, 8:638, 721-22, 733, 746, 9:762, 769.

<sup>4</sup> This day Morris also sent another letter to Hancock pertaining to commissions for foreign officers. "You have enclosed the Memorial of Count Montfort lately arrived from France. I sent the letters recommending him to the Committee of Correspondence. Two other officers came with him, they are all exceedingly impatient and Importunate. For Heavens sake determine for them speedily & form some plan by which all the French officers can be made useful or they will cost a deal of Money, be of no service & become exceedingly dissatisfied themselves." PCC, item 137, appendix, fol. 159. On March 21, 1777, Congress recommended Montfort to General Washington for a lieutenancy. *JCC*, 7:189.

## Robert Morris to Benjamin Rush

Dear Sir:

Philadelphia Feb. 17. 1777.

I send you enclosed a letter from our friend Genl. Lee directed to you or me; his request must be complied with.<sup>1</sup> I dont know who the Congress will send. It will be very inconvenient should they think of me, but their commands must be obeyed. Pray inform Congress that since sealing the public letter, Carpenter Wharton has been here and says his credit is totally ruined if we do not give him an immediate supply of 100,000 dollars. I am in great haste. Yours &c.<sup>2</sup> Robt. Morris

Tr (NN).

<sup>1</sup> Charles Lee's February 9 letter "To Robert Morris or Benjamin Rush Esq'rs." is in the Sol Feinstein Collection, DLC microfilm. "I have wrote to the Congress," Lee explained, "by Lord and General Howe's permission. My request is that They will depute two or three Gentlemen to N. York with whom I may communicate something of the last importance to myself and, I think, to the Public. The compliance with My request can have no bad consequences at least. I therefore conjure you, if you are with the Congress, to urge the compliance. Whoever is deputed will be in perfect security, as no Body can doubt of Lord and General Howe's words as Gentlemen. If you should be nominated for God's Sake, make haste as much depends on expedition." For Congress' response to Lee's request, see Rush's Notes of Debates, February 21; and Rush to Robert Morris, February 22, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> This day Morris also sent the following letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety. "I have just recd the enclosed letter & think if you were to Man Cap Rices

Galley immediately & send her round to Toms River she would not only save the Salt Works untill a proper Land force can be appointed but wou'd also, probably be very usefull in retaking some of the Prizes the Men of War send along shoar for N York & in case of any attack Meditated against this City it may be a means of procuring early intelligence. He can always on such an Occasion come into this River in time to assist." Peter Force Papers, DLC. For the council's response to this request, see *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:126.

## Secret Committee to the Commissioners at Paris

Baltimore in Maryland Feby. 17th. 1777

Honorable Gentlemen

In Secret Committee of Congress

We have the honor to enclose you a Resolve of Congress that is of great Importance to the public Service,<sup>1</sup> which has suffered considerably the last Fall, and during this Winter, by the insufficient manner in which our Soldiers were clothed. Having found much Delay heretofore in getting Cloth made up, the Congress desire that 40,000 compleat Suits of Soldiers Cloaths may be sent. In giving directions for the making these Cloaths, it may be necessary, Gentlemen, to inform that both the Coats and Waistcoats must be short skirted, according to the dress of our Soldiery, and that they should be generally for Men of stouter make than those of France. Variety of Sizes will of course be ordered.

The Eastern Ports are generally entered with so much more Safety than the Southern, that we recommend the former for these Goods to be sent to, giving Orders to the Captain to inform Congress immediately of his Arrival, either by Express or by personal Attendance. We expect this Letter will be delivered you by Capt Johnston, Commander of the Lexington armed Vessel,<sup>2</sup> and as the Congress are very anxious to hear from you, it is probable Capt. Johnston will not remain long enough in France to get either Cloth or Cloaths in any quantity, but since it is necessary for the health of the Soldiers to cover them from the Dews of summer it will be of great Advantage to send a considerable quantity of Blankets and Tent Cloth by the Return of the Lexington, with Stockings, Flints, & Muskets with Bayonets. The Soldiers Cloaths and the Cloth should be so contrived as to reach North America by the month of September at furthest.

We are with esteem, honorable Gentlemen, your most obedient and very humble Servants.

Richard Henry Lee

Fras Lewis

Wm Whipple

RC (British Museum, Additional Manuscripts 34413). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly the resolve of February 5, directing the commissioners to procure blankets and clothing. *JCC*, 7:92-93. A variant draft of this letter, in Lee's

hand, included as a postscript a list of the items requested by this resolve. Lee Papers, MH-H.

<sup>2</sup> John Hancock, on behalf of the Marine Committee, sent Robert and Samuel Purviance a brief note this day requesting that they make \$20 advances to seamen "without delay that the manning of the Lexington may be promoted with all possible dispatch." Naval History Collection, NHpR. See *JCC*, 7:127.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feb. 18. 1777

I shall inclose with this a Newspaper or two.

I am as yet in tollerable Health. My Eyes are somewhat troublesome. I believe I must assume the Appearance of Wisdom, Age and Gravity and put on Spectacles to walk in, about the Streets.

I hear nothing from you, nor from any Part of New England, but I am endeavouring to devise some better Regulations of the Post Office, so that I hope that Channell of Communication will be opened.<sup>1</sup>

We are told that the Air of Baltimore is unhealthy, and I confess I should dread it, if I were to stay here long. But We shall soon remove.

You may write now by the Post. I am very anxious to hear from you, and to know the State of public Affairs, in your Part of the World.

I have written by Mr. Hall a Resignation of an Office. I suppose it will make a Noise. But I hope not much. I cant help it. But should be glad to hear from you, how it is received. I hope they will fill it up soon, that the Talk may be soon over.

I could not be, at the same Time in Maryland and Massachusetts Bay, which was Reason enough for the Measure, if I had no other, but I have many more, and much stronger.

I have not Health enough, and never shall have to discharge such a Trust. I can but just keep myself alive, and in tollerable Spirits when I am master of my own Time and Course of Life. But this is not all.

I am not formal and ceremonious enough for such a stiff Situation. But you know I have many Reasons more.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:163-64.

<sup>1</sup> Adams was a member of a committee appointed on February 17 "to revise the regulations of the post office . . . so as to render the conveyance of intelligence more expeditious and certain." The committee brought in its report on February 25. Congress tabled the report, but periodically returned to it throughout the year. See *JCC*, 7:127, 153-54, 258, 9:816-17.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

My Dear Sir

Baltimore Febry. 18th. 1777

I have Detain'd the Express to this mornng. waiting for some Papers



from the Printer, but as he has disappointed me, I Send him off, and am to Acquaint you that yesterday I Rec'd Directions from Congress, to Adjourn on Tuesday next 25th Inst. from the Town of Baltimore to the *City of Philadelphia*.<sup>1</sup> This I dare Say will afford you pleasure, and I am to Request that immediately on Receipt of this you will please to Issue orders to Mr Hiltzheimer for four good cover'd Waggon, with four good Horses & a Sober Driver to each, to be Sent to me with all possible Dispatch to Convey down to Philada. the Publick Papers &c. Do let them be well Chosen, and I beg your immediate Attention to this.

The Inclos'd Resolves when you have perus'd them, do forward to the Genl. by any oppory.

As I shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you in Philada. I shall not Add, but Refer what I have further to Say for a social hour. If, my Friend, I can be of any Service to Mrs Morris on my way, let me know it, & you may Depend I shall most chearfully obey you. Would you Chuse her to Come in Company with us, I will Call for her & Conduct her with all the Safety & Care in my power. Give me but a hint, & it shall be Complied with. I Judge I shall be in Philada. by Saturday or Sunday week.

God Bless you, Remember me to all friends, I am your Affection[at]e Friend &c,

John Hancock

[P.S.] Your Letters I have Rec'd to 15th Inst.

Dont forget the Waggon.

Did you Send the Express to Boston as desir'd in mine of 10 Jany, with the Letters then Inclos'd, I have had no Return.

The North Carolina Express is impatient.

Money went off yesterday, for you, Genl Mifflin & Council of Safety.<sup>2</sup>

RC (MdHi).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:127.

<sup>2</sup> On February 13 Congress had advanced \$100,000 to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety "for the recruiting service." *JCC*, 7:113.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

My Dear Sir,

Baltimore, Feby 18, 1777.

I send Mr Tailor, my Secry, to Philada to procure a suitable house well furnish'd for me, and I have taken the Liberty to desire him to apply to you for yr advice in this instance, not doubting yor good offices. Congress will adjourn on Tuesday next to that day week then to meet in Philada and I hope on Saturday or Sunday week to Take you by the hand; my Friend, it will give me pleasure to see you, & I hope our coming there will in some degree Releive you from the great Burden that has laid upon you. I assure you I have felt for you. No money, constant application for

it, & a steady succession of Business to attend to has made yr scituation hard indeed, however you gave up all pro Bono Publico & I know you will persevere—you are as well Calculated to go thro' Business as any Gentleman I know, that I believe you bear up under it as well as any Gentn could. Pray do hurry on the waggons I wrote you for this morg. I cannot move without them, nor can Thompson—four will be enough—do let them be good and well Cover'd, with good horses and drivers. Can I be of any Service to Mrs Morris on the Road? Command me if I can. I am almost hurried out of my Life, but I will bear up. Complimts to Mr Tailor, Genl Mease, Mr Nesbit, Mr Beach & all Enquiring Friends. I hope soon to Join you at the Oyster Club. Adieu & believe me, Yours Sincerely,

John Hancock.

[P.S.] A number of friends Purviance, Lux, Peters &c &c. dine with me tomorrow, when we shall not be unmindful of our Philada friends.

Tr (DLC).

## Francis Lewis to the New York Convention

Dear Sir,

Baltimore, 18th Feby. 1777.

I have repeatedly wrote pressing letters, backed by resolves of Congress, for a full representation of our State, but have as yet not been honoured with an answer.<sup>1</sup> Permit me still to remind you, that in my opinion, our State may suffer for the want thereof; for instance the General has recommended to Congress the promotion of three major-generals from brigadiers, and ten brigadiers from colonels; and has given in a list of some persons as a hint to Congress. The mode and persons has occasioned many days' debate, and is this day to be brought on again, and notwithstanding many declarations to the contrary, Colonial prejudices sway the minds of individuals, that each State appear interested in the debates, for promotion in the line of their respective States.<sup>2</sup> From this, sir, you may judge how the State of New-York is circumstanced, having no vote in this and many other weighty points, and which I hope the Honourable Convention will speedily rectify.

I informed you in my former letters, that Capt. Rogers of the Montgomery private sloop of war, was in this port with two prizes, one of them with a quantity of woolens, linens, &c. which wait your directions for their disposal; as we are informed that three British ships of war with tenders, are cruizing in Chesapeake bay, to assist the tories on the eastern shore of said bay. Congress has thought fit to send down all the armed vessels (of which the Montgomery is one,) to suppress the insurgents, which they have effected, and I expect Capt. Rogers up in a few days,

when shall give him all the aid in my power to fit his vessel for another cruise.

I am also to inform you that Congress have appointed the 25th instant for the day on which they will adjourn to the city of Philadelphia, so that the Delegates you shall send to Congress may meet them there.<sup>3</sup>

I have the honour to be, sir, Your most humble servant,

Fra. Lewis.

MS not found; reprinted from *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:358.

<sup>1</sup> See Lewis to the New York Convention, January 7 and 16, and to John McKesson, January 31, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 12-19, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:127.

## Robert Morris to the Commissioners at Paris

Honorable Gentlemen.

Philada. Feby 18th. 1777.

By this Opportunity I forward you Sundry dispatches from Congress and the Committee of Secret Correspondance Still at Baltimore,<sup>1</sup> and from them I have just received the inclosed resolve of Congress dated the 5th Inst., Copies of which I shall transmit you by various Conveyances in order that you may give orders for procuring the Articles required and to have them Collected ready for Embarkation.<sup>2</sup> The places of their destination are not yet fixed but you will hear from the Committee or from me very soon on that Subject. In the meantime the Articles may be provided and you may rest assured of our utmost exertions to make you effective remittances to Answer all your Engagements. We have at length got one of our Frigates the Randolph, Capt. Biddle, Cruizing on this Coast to meet any Single Frigates of the Enemy and hope for good Accounts from her. She sails fast, is well Manned and Appointed. Others will soon join her and our utmost exertions will be used to put the Navy on a respectable and formidable footing fast as possible. No event of War of any Material Consequence has happened since the last letter from the Committee. General Washington continues to Pen up the Enemy in Brunswick from whence distress obliges them to send Forageing once or twice a week, and altho they come out 2 to 3000 Strong our People always attack and never fail to kill and take more or less of them. They have sent for reinforcements from Rhode Island and probably may render the Jersey War a little more Serious again but our new Enlistments go on so fast we shall soon be too formidable for them in the Field unless they receive very great reinforcements from Europe, and I fancy they may not find that so practicable now as the year past.

With the greatest respect and Esteem, I have the honor to remain, Honorable Gentlemen, Your very Obedt. hble Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (CtHi). In a clerical hand, and signed by Morris.

<sup>1</sup> Morris also wrote the following brief letter to the commissioners this day. "The enclosed Commission was delivered to me by the Secy of Congress just before their retreat to Baltimore, and as I then sent my Books & papers into the Country for safety this went with them and this the first conveyance that has offered since my papers were brought back I embrace it to transmit the same, a duplicate will go by another opportunity." Silas Deane Account Book, CtHi; *NYHS Collections* 19 (1886): 49.

<sup>2</sup> See Secret Committee to the Commissioners at Paris, February 17, 1777.

## Secret Committee to the Commissioners at Paris

In Secret Committee of Congress  
Baltimore, Feby. 18th. 1777

Honorable Gentlemen,

You will receive herewith a Copy of our Letter of Yesterday by the Lexington with its enclosures. This goes to Boston for a Passage from thence. An armed Vessel belonging to that State will carry the dispatches & will be governed by your directions respecting her Load back, & the Time of her return. Should you have failed in obtaining the Loan, or of getting the Cloth, Cloaths, &c mentioned in the Resolve of Congress, you will please turn the Vessel over to Messrs. Thomas Morris & William Lee, or either of them to receive such Continental Cargo as they may be enabled to send in her. Unless you should be of Opinion that the public Service requires that she should return & immediately to North America with your dispatches, in which case you will do what you judge best for the public good.

We are with perfect esteem, honorable Gentlemen, your most obedient  
and humble Servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Frans. Lewis

Wm Whipple

RC (ViU). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir

Baltimore 18th Feb 1777.

Your favor of 23d ulto by Capt Tucker is just come to hand.<sup>1</sup> 42,000 dollars are on the way to you and I hope will be in your possession long before this reaches you. The letters you refer to I have not seen—viz those to the Secret and Marine Committees. I shall pay due attention to them when I know their contents. The letter you refer me to concerning the guns from Connecticut is not come to hand. I am therefore in the dark about that matter. This I know that Governor Trumbull was desired to



spare the guns he had provided for the ship built in Connecticut to the Raleigh, provided others could be procured in season for the Trumbull and as I have heard that Capt Manly has been in Connecticut after guns and have since heard he has guns for his ship, I suspect there has been some underhand dealing in this business and think the villainy should be brought to light, therefore hope you'll spare no pains to get to the bottom of it—in order thereto it will be necessary to know of Govr Trumbull at whose request they were spared to Manly.

Congress are about returning to Philadelphia. I believe they will adjourn thither next week. Till then I do not expect to have it in my power to send you the dimensions of the 74 gun ship, nor do I suppose it indispensably necessary at present, as the timber may be getting and other materials preparing while the workmen are employed on the other ship.<sup>2</sup> I am exceeding fearful of the vessels you are sending to this place and Virginia, as there are several ships now in Chesapeake Bay who have taken many vessels, but I have no order to direct them to be stopped but shall take the earliest opportunity to consult the Committees and write you fully on the subject. In the meantime hope no time will be lost in getting them ready for sea.

In great haste, I am your friend &c, Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC)

<sup>1</sup> An extract of Langdon's January 23 letter to Whipple is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1020–21.

<sup>2</sup> Dimensions for the 74-gun ship were inclosed in the Secret Committee's April 2, 1777, letter to Langdon.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris

Gentlemen

Baltimore Feby 19. 1777

The events of war have not since our last furnished any thing decisive. The enemy's army still remains encampt upon the Hills near Brunswick & our troops still continue to beat back their Convoys insomuch that we understand their horses die in numbers and we have reason to believe that the difficulty of removing their Stores, Cannon &c will be insuperably great until the opening of the Rariton furnishes a passage by water for their return to N. York. The American Army, is not numerous at present, but the new levies are collecting fast as possible, and we hope to have a sufficient force early in the field. We hear by a Speech of the King of Great Britain to his Parliament, that much money will be called for, no doubt to prosecute the war with unrelenting vigor. That we shall op-

pose with all our power will be certain, but the event must be doubtful until France takes a decisive part in the war. When that happens our liberties will be secured, and the glory and Greatness of France be placed on the most solid ground. What may be the consequences of her delay must be a painful consideration of every friend of liberty and Mankind. Thus viewing our situation we are sure it will occasion your Strongest exertions to procure an event of such momentous concern to your country. It is in vain for us to have on hand a great abundance of Tobacco, Rice, Indigo, flour, and other valuable articles of Merchandize if prevented from exporting them by having the whole naval force of G.B. to contend against. It is not only for the interest of these States, but clearly for the benefit of Europe in general, that we should not be hindered from freely transporting our products that abound here and are much wanted there. Why should the avarice & ambition of G.B. be gratified to the great injury of other Nations?

Mr. Deane recommends sending Frigates to France to convoy our merchandize, but it should be considered that we have an extensive coast to defend, that we are young in the business of fitting ships of war, that founderies for cannon were to be erected, the difficulty of getting seamen quickly, when Privateers abound, as they do in the States, where Sailors are chiefly to be met with, lastly our frigates are much restrained by the heavy ships of the enemy, which are placed at the entrance of our Bays, in short, the attention of Great Britain must be drawn in part from hence, before France can benefit largely by our Commerce. We sensibly feel the disagreeable situation Mr. Deane must have been in from the receipt of the Committee's letter in June and the late date of his own letter in October, but this was occasioned by accident, not neglect, since letters were sent to him in all the intervening months, which have either fallen into the enemies hands, or have been destroyed.<sup>1</sup> From the time of Dr. Franklin's Sailing, until we arrived at this place, the Ships of war at the mouth of Delaware, and the interruption given the post, added to the barrenness of events prevented us from writing when we had no particular commands from Congress for you.

Mr. Bingham informs us from Martinique, that he learned from a Spanish General there on his way to South America, that the King of Spain was well disposed to do the United States Offices of friendship, and that a loan of money might be obtained from that Court. As the power sent you for borrowing is not confined to place, we mention this intelligence, that you may avail yourselves of his Catholic Majesty friendly Designs. Perhaps a loan may be obtained there on better terms than elsewhere. We expect it will not be long before Congress will appoint Commissioners to the Courts formerly mentioned and in the mean time you will serve the cause of your Country in the best manner with the Ministers from those

Courts to that of Versailles. Earnestly wishing for great news, and quickly from you, we remain with friendship, and esteem, Honble Gentlemen &c,

B. Harrison  
R. H. Lee

P.S. Congress adjourns this week back to Philadelphia.

FC (DNA: PCC, item 79).

<sup>1</sup> For information on Robert Morris' letters to Silas Deane, see Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, this date.

## Richard Henry Lee to John Page

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 19. 1777

I am extremely obliged to you for your last favour and much pleased with the spirit of your letter. I am as sure as of my existence that if our large Gallies were manned, gunned, and fitted, that the navigation of our Bay would receive no interruption.<sup>1</sup> I wish our Government would consult their Sister Maryland about this business, and with joint council and united strength, immediately equip such a number of strong Gallies as to free our Bay from these piratical incursions. Experience has proved the efficacy of these Vessels in small waters, and in the way of surprise against the largest Ships. They are cheaper than Ships, and rigged Ship fashion will be well understood by our Navigators. They are the best batteries, because they are movable ones, and the circumstance of drawing little water, peculiarly fits them for the shallow waters on our coasts. I pray you Sir to exert your influence to obtain the speedy use of the valuable Vessels, the surest defence, and the cheapest we can employ. The events of war are at a stand until our new Army can assemble. The enemies horses are nearly all dead for want of forage, and this is withheld from them by our feeble force, which is wisely and bravely employed to watch and defeat every foraging party that descends the hills of Brunswick. How unhappy it is and how disgraceful to America, that a Continent of Freemen should suffer 6000 men determined upon their ruin, to winter upon a hill in their Country! But yet it is so, and every exertion of Congress, the most urgent calls from them on every part, has been ineffectual to procure the destruction of these foes to human freedom! For heavens sake Sir press forward our Quota, that we may early in the Spring, or before the Winter is over, do something effectual with these our determined enemies. That a war in Europe is not far off, is very clear to me. The Tyrants speech strongly suggests it amidst his fears of alarming his deluded people. We every day expect the Vessel that carried Dr. Franklin, to return, & by her we hope for the most agreeable accounts. However, on these I would not place our reliance.

We have means enough, if wisely improved, to secure us against every wicked attempt to destroy our liberties. Procul a Jove, procul a fulmene. Your Brother & Sister were inoculated three days ago, and must of course remain here until their recovery. Congress have determined to return Philadelphia next Wednesday. In the recess, I shall carry Mrs. Lee to Virginia that she may be indulged with the sight of her children whom she longs to see after 6 months absence. Farewell dear Sir,

Richard Henry Lee

[P.S.] Remember me to all friends. Mr. Wythe is amongst my chosen few.

A number of Seamen lately put on shore from Com[modore] Hotham say that the Men of War are greatly afraid of our Gallies. Let us cultivate this passion by ordering our best appointed Gallies to lurk about them, & in calms or thick weather to annoy them with all imaginable spirit & address.

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> A January 29 letter in which Page expressed concern for the fate of a sloop laden with clothing, should it venture up the bay, as well as his February 27 reply to Lee's letter in which Page promised to try to influence the governor and council in naval affairs, are in the Lee Family Papers, ViU.

## Robert Morris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence

Gentn.

Philada. Feby 19. 1777

I have just received the enclosed letters by a Ship from Martinico, those from Paris are of an interesting nature notwithstanding Mr. Deane's fears & alarms from which I think he wou'd very soon be relieved as I sent him letters both Political & Commercial the 6th June, 13th July, 11th August, 12th Septr., 4th Octr. & 23d Octr.<sup>1</sup> beside several letters since & it is very hard indeed, if some of these don't reach him soon after the 25th Octr. when his latest letter is dated.<sup>2</sup> The Committee generally wrote at the same dates I did which shou'd be mentioned to Congress that they may know thereby that Mr Deanes want of intelligence has been more owing to unavoidable misfortunes than to any neglect, and I cannot help repeating what I mentioned in a former letter to which you have never made any reply, that it is absolutely necessary to employ as Secretary to this Committee some Gentn of learning, knowledge and extensive abilities, who shou'd be constantly employed in writing intelligence, keeping a register or Diary of all public events, Collecting News papers & Political Publications &c &c for it is impossible for Members of Congress to do this & attend their other duties as Members. This Secy shou'd also have a Clerk to Copy & a runner after intelligence & to seek out Conveyances &c &c.



I have got a Young Gentn that can be depended on to proceed in the Sloop Independance for Martinico & thence to France in a French Bottom with your dispatches marked No. 2.<sup>3</sup> I shall add every material intelligence since the date of your letters. I have sent the Fly in search of the Randolph, Capt Biddle, with orders for him to proceed for Martinico & have embraced that Conveyance also to transmit the amplest advices I cou'd give.

I also send you herewith a packet which I recd from France some time ago & from the old date I concluded it at that time to be a Copy of one Doctr Franklin received before he departed. Therefore I locked it up intending to be the bearer of it myself but accidentally looking into it again I am doubtfull whether it is the Copy I took it for or not and as I dont care to trust any body with the Translation of it I now send it for you to do as you please with, and as its detention here a few weeks has been purely Accidental I hope you will not blame me, for it might have happened in the same manner to any of you.

I suppose the Prussian officer will soon be applying to me; those French Gentn sent by Mr Penet are very impatient for being employed & really I think the Congress cannot too soon determine to form a Corps of Foreign Officers to Act in a Body & as they learn our language keep drafting them out into other Regiments. If you want to send other dispatches the Sac-hem will soon be ready to carry them & so will the Andw Doria & Race Horse after her. The Fly being too small to carry remittances I have ordered her after speaking the Randolph & delivering the dispatches to proceed off the Capes of Virginia to turn from thence the inward bound Vessels & I sent the Fly two mo[nths] provisions for that Cruize. The Musquito wants repairs & the Georgia Packet is loaden for Georgia.

I hope soon to see you here & am, Gentn., Your obedt hble servt.

Robt Morris

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137).

<sup>1</sup> Morris' July 13 letter to Deane has not been found. For Morris' other letters, see entries under their respective dates.

<sup>2</sup> In his October 25, 1776, letter, Deane complained that "your silence ever since the 5th of last June discourages me at times. Indeed, it well nigh distracts me. From whatever cause the silence has happened, it has greatly prejudiced the affairs of the United Colonies of America." Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:183.

<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly John Reed, brother of Joseph Reed. See Morris to William Bingham, February 25, 1777.

## Robert Morris to the Secret Committee

Philadelphia February 19 1777

I have transmitted the Resolve of Congress of the 5 February to the Commissioners at Paris as you will see by the Copy of a letter I wrote

them yesterday. You should have sent me half a dozen Authenticated Copies of the Resolve—it went by the *Fly* to the *Randolph* which will carry it to Martinico. A Copy Certified by myself goes by the *Independence* & you had best send me some more for other opportunities.

In Consequence of the Resolves of Congress and an Order from the Marine Committee I have sent down the Schooner *Musquito* yesterday with two Months provisions to the *Fly* which was then lying at Rheed Island and I sent down Orders to Capn Warner immediately to proceed to the Capes and give notice to the Light House to make the Signal for Capn Biddle whenever they saw a Ship in the offing.<sup>1</sup> I told him to keep Cruizing every day in the Offing and told him the Signal Biddle would make to be known by. Each Night I told him to run in under the Land to prevent the Enemys Ships from Cutting him off. By this means he will be sure to meet the *Randolph* as she will come in sight of the Light House on purpose to learn if there be any fresh Orders for him. Capn Warner will then deliver the Sundry orders and despatches I sent for Capn Biddle and they will part, the *Fly* to Cruize off the Capes of Virginia and the *Randolph* for Martinico & herein I enclose a Copy of the Orders I sent him and of the sundry letters relative to his Voyage, which I hope will meet approbation, and as they relate in some degree to the Marine Department I think you had best lay them before the Marine Committee or if you think necessary before Congress, because there are other Vessels will soon go for Martinico, and if any part of which I have written is disapproved counter orders will probably arrive in time.

I hope Biddle will send us a *Galeatea*, a *Pearl*, or a *Camelias* before he leaves this Coast.<sup>2</sup> Pray desire the Marine Committee if they are not coming up to Send me Orders respecting the *Delaware*. I have wrote General Washington to Send her Marines, and as it will be difficult manning her, I think she had best Sail soon as ever she has enough of men to work her, proceed to Windward of Barbadoes and Cruise untill she Manns herself from Prizes and then go to Martinico for supplies to return her with. The *Washington* May be Managed in the Same way, but there is no Guns for the *Effingham* therefore I think she had best load and send her to France to be compleated. And I dont know how it happens but there is no Guns made nor making for that ship. Somebody should Superintend the Casting of Cannon than [*sic*] they do but I think Gentn out of doors should be employed to conduct that business and have no other pursuit.

Tr (William Bell Clark transcript from Bank of North America Papers, PHi). Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1236–37.

<sup>1</sup> Writing in his capacity as vice president of the Marine Committee, Morris sent the following letter to Lt. Thomas Albertson on February 18. "You are immediately to proceed down the River in search of the Sloop *Fly*, Captain Elisha Warner, which I am told is not at Rheed Island. You must find him speedily as possible and deliver him the Letter and Packet given you herewith and return to

this City bringing his receipt." Paullin, *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:82. Morris' letter to Warner has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> The three vessels named were British frigates.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

Feby 19. 1777

Upon the question for referring the appointment of three major generals to the general officers of the army<sup>1</sup> it was said in the *negative*.

Dr Rush. "I have heard the congress more than once called a *republic*. I love to realize the idea, and I hope it will inspire us with the virtuous principles of republican governments. One of the most powerful & happy commonwealths in the world Rome called her general officers from the plough & paid no regard to rank, service or seniority. We have of late been successful it is true, but I despair of our country being saved 'till the instrumentality of military wisdom & virtue are employed for that purpose, and these can never be had 'till we use a sovereign power in calling them forth where ever we find them. It is no purpose to talk of the practice of despotic princes. They promote according to seniority it is true, but they possess an absolute power of recalling, disgracing, or breaking their general officers as soon as they make them, and we find they are fond of exercising this power upon the least neglect, inattention or want of Success. The case is different with us. A general may lose a battle or a province, and we possess no power to recall or to displace him. If the motion is passed I shall move immediately afterwards that all the civil power of the continent may be transferred from our hands into the hands of the army, & that they may be proclaimed the highest power of the people."

(*Mr. John Adams.*) Dr Wetherspoon. "Mr President, I am against the motion. It will produce faction, and disputes among your generals. I once left the honors of the college over which I preside to the choice of the senior class, But it produced so much confusion & ill blood, that I was obliged to resume that power again, and have since exercised to the satisfaction of my pupils as well as my own."

Col Richd Henry Lee. "I wish the learned Doctor would distinguish between the practice of children & men. Our generals would certainly make a judicious choice, and would not be governed by the principles which actuate boys at School."

Mr. John Adams. "Mr. President, I differ from the gentleman who spoke last. There are certain principles which follow us thro' life, and none more certainly than the *love of the first place*. We see it in the forms on which Children sit at Schools. It prevails equally to the last period of life. I am sorry to find it prevails so little in this Assembly. I have been distressed to see some members of this house disposed to idolise an image



Benjamin Rush



which their own hands have molten. I speak here of the superstitious veneration that is sometimes paid to Genl Washington. Altho' I honour him for his good qualities, yet in this house I feel myself his Superior. In private life I shall always acknowledge that he is mine.<sup>2</sup> It becomes us to attend early to the restraining our army. This we shall find the next difficult thing to preventg. the depreciation of our money. I have no fears from the resignation of Officers if junior Officers are preferred to them. If they have virtue they will continue with us. If not, their resignation will not hurt us."

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:133. See also Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety, January 31, note 2; and James Wilson to Arthur St. Clair, February 20, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Rush also repeated this portion of Adams' speech in his autobiography. Benjamin Rush, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush*, ed. George W. Corner (Princeton: Published for the American Philosophical Society by Princeton University Press, 1948), p. 141.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bro.

Baltimore 19th Feby 1777

My last was by Mr. Betten who set out the 10th inst since which nothing has happen'd this way worth mentioning. Several of the Enemies Ships are still in this Bay (Chesapeak) who do us great mischief, as but few vessels bound to this place or Virginia can escape them but as the Delaware is at present open many vessels get in there. By accots receiv'd from all Quarters a European war seems inevitable, but I hope the prospect of our being in some measure reliev'd by our Enimies having other objects to attend to will not in the least degree abate the ardour in the several states necessary for raising the new Army. We at this time Ought to have 50,000 men in the field, indeed half that number just now wod put our affairs in an exceeding good scituation, But I greatly fear the Enemy will get some capital advantages before we shall have a sufficient body of Troops to oppose them. I am extreamply anxious to hear how the recruiting service goes on to the Eastward, having heard nothing from thence, since your's of 8th Jany from Boston. One of the Frigates has sail'd from Philaa, another will sail very shortly from thence & one from this place if she is not Stopd by the Enemies ships in the Bay. Congress have come to a determination to return to Philaa next week so you may Expect my next will be from that place. Pray let me hear from you often & inform me how matters go on. Decisive measures ought to [*be*] taken with our internal Enemies; they do us much more mischief than People seem to be aware of. It is not possible that any man in America can be in a state of Nutralty at this time, I therefore hope effectual measures

will be taken to prevent farther mischief by those Pests to society. Adieu.  
Your affecte Bror,  
W Whipple

RC (MH-H).

## James Wilson to Arthur St. Clair

Baltimore 19th Feby [1777]

You have probably heard that I am removed from the Delegation of Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> I retire without Disgust; and with the conscious Reflection of having done my Duty to the Public, and to the State which I represented.

On Tuesday next, Congress will adjourn from this Place to Philadelphia. The Week after next I shall be in that City on Business of my own. While I con[tinue] here, I am still hurried as much as ever. The [enclosed?] Letter is a Proof of it. I began on a ha[lf sheet?] without observing it to be so; and have not T[ime to?] write it again. I shall have more Leisure by [and] by. You know it will always please me to hear from you. I am, Dear Sir, Yours very sincerely,  
James Wilson

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush, January 24, note 1; and Robert Morris to James Wilson, January 31, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feb. 20th. 1777

This Morning I received yours of the 26th Ult. It is the first I have received from you, and except one from Gen. Palmer of the 28th it is the first I have received from our State.

Yours made me very happy. Dont be uneasy about my Waiter. He behaves very well to me, and he has not the least Appearance of a Spy or a Deserter. He has not Curiosity, nor Activity nor sense enough for such a Character. He does his Duty extreamly well however in his station. But if he was a Spy he would learn nothing from me. He knows no more, from me, than the Horse he rides, nor shall he know. . . .<sup>1</sup> I have no Conversation with him upon Politicks, nor shall he come to the Sight of Papers.

I hope our Soldiers for the new Army will be all inoculated at Home before they begin their March. The Small Pox is so thick in the Country that there is no Chance of escaping it in the natural Way. Gen. Washington has been obliged to inoculate his whole Army. We are inoculating soldiers here and at Philadelphia.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2: 164–65.

<sup>1</sup> Suspension points in MS.

## John Adams to Joseph Palmer

Dr Sir

Baltimore Feb 20. 1777

Yesterday, I had the Pleasure of yours of Jany. 28.<sup>1</sup> I am rejoiced to hear of the Measures taken by our state to raise their Battalions and to tax an hundred Thousand Pounds. Congress have been upon the subject of regulating the Prices of Labour and Provisions. I shall inclose you, what they have done.<sup>2</sup>

Are not these mere temporary Expedients and palliative Remedies. We must aim at a radical Cure.

The success of our Cause appears to me to depend intirely, under God, on our Supporting the Credit of our Currency. This must be done at all Events but cannot be done long by regulating Prices. We must cease emitting. We must borrow. And We must import if possible a Fund of Gold and Silver to redeem the Bills as they become payable. Pray write me your Thoughts upon this Subject. I wish I had Time to enlarge.

RC (NN). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> This letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> See John Hancock to Certain States, this date.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb'y 20th [1777]

A Committee on a letter from General How to General Washington reported,<sup>1</sup> that five Hessian Field Officers, & a Col. Campbell should be confined in order for retaliation, & that they should have copies of the resolutions & letters relative to this matter, in order to manifest the reluctance of Congress to this severity; which became necessary, being the only means whereby they could teach their enemies to regard the Law of Nations & the rights of humanity.<sup>2</sup> Some severe epithets were prefixed to *enemies* in the report, & they were objected to as unbecoming the dignity of Congress. A debate ensued in which some Gentlemen pointed out the impropriety of a bold, figurative style in public Instruments, & the beauty & propriety of simplicity. R.H. Lee, of Virginia (as usual) insisted strongly on retaining the epithets, because they expressed only what our enemies really are, & urged that the best writers always used such terms on the like occasions. The Delegate from North Carolina observed that simplicity of style was true beauty, & dignity, in the language of public bodies. Embellishments of splendid epithets & figures, if proper at all,

were only for rhetoricians & such as write<sup>3</sup> for amusement, that he could wish our Energy might appear in our Actions, and that our Language might be simple and unadorned. He said he admired the Peasants of Switzerland who in their Struggles for Freedom were as Remarkable for Modesty in their Language, as for Vigor in their Exertions, that he wished the Congress would Imitate them in both. On the Question the Exceptionable passage was expunged. The Debate now turned on the Question whether the Law of Nations was proper to be mentioned. Some Gentlemen Argued that it was improper to apply it to the proceedings against General Lee because they proposed trying him by the Laws of his own Country, but others Insisted that they had no power to try him more than any other Prisoner by those Laws. Many Distinctions were attempted which I did not understand. At length the North Carolina Delegate declared he thought all Laws were<sup>4</sup> to be laid aside but what both Parties were subject to in Common, these were only the Laws of Nature and Nations. The Municipal Laws of all Countries at War were Silent with respect to the mere Transaction that relates to, or were the Consequence of War. That it was the proper Policy of Britain still to regard the Americans as Subjects and to Insist on the Execution of the Municipal Laws, but it was the proper policy of America to maintain that the American States stand in no other relat[ion to] Britain than as an Independant Empire at War with her, and therefore that the Law of Nations alone ought to be observed between them, that retaliation is the only Instrument whereby Nations can Compell the Observance of that Law, and America ought therefore firmly to retaliate when the Law of Nations was Violated. The Question was carried in favor of the Insertion of the Law of Nations.

MS (NN). Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Washington sent Howe's January 23 letter enclosed in a letter to Hancock of February 5 that was read in Congress nine days later. PCC, item 152, 3:505-6, 517-22; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:102-6; and JCC, 7:121, 124.

<sup>2</sup> For these resolves, see JCC, 7:135. Washington subsequently protested that Congress' threat to retaliate against British prisoners of war was unwise, but despite this Congress reaffirmed its decision on March 14. See JCC, 7:177-79; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:211-13, 252-53; and Burke's Notes of Debates, March 14, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Remainder of text taken from MS.

<sup>4</sup> "Ought" in Tr.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Town Feby. 20th. 1777.

I am sorry to inform You that the Report of the Engagement on Fryday week is without any other Foundation than a little Skirmish, which the General barely mentions in his Letter to our Committee in Philadelphia.<sup>1</sup>



Congress are anxiously expecting a Reinforcement to our brave and worthy General from the new Levies. Above Six weeks ago Congress directed General Smallwood to take a Tour thro the State, and exert his Influence in Raising our Quota, and they called on all our public Bodies, and every Friend to America to yield him their assistance.<sup>2</sup> I mention this because Congress flattered themselves with great Success from this Measure, & it is said it has been neglected.

A little Attention to our public Affairs, and the State of our Army will convince any Man that the most vigorous Exertions are necessary and must be adopted to procure our Quota. I shall not enlarge on this important Subject. I beg Leave to call your immediate attention to it, and if a Moments delay can be granted, be pleased to consider the following Extract of a Letter from Genl. Washington to his Friend Colo. Harrison, of 12 Instant.<sup>3</sup> "With great Truth I can add, that Heaven alone knows upon what principle they (the Enemy) act, or by what Means, they are kept quiet. That we are not able to make the least Stand, if they move, is as clear as the Sun in its' meridian Brightness. Whilst You are at an Expence equal to the Maintainance of a large Army, & expect that We are very strong, We have scarce Men enough to mount the Common Guards."

I thought this Intelligence necessary for your Information, but the Communication of it to our General Assembly must be made with every Caution of Secrecy. The Knowledge of it may bring Destruction on our Country.

I wish it was in my Power to advise in the present Crisis. The Mode in the Resolve of Congress to Gen. Smallwood may be of some Service. The Gentlemen of this County have not as yet assisted, by public Meetings & associations, to carry any public Measures into Execution. I beg Leave to submit the enclosed proposal to your Consideration.<sup>4</sup> If adopted it ought to be late in the Session, and after all other Exertions have been made.

I am, Gent. with Regard & Respect, Your Obedient Servant,<sup>5</sup>

Saml. Chase

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Committee to John Hancock, February 13 and 15, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 6:1032, 1058.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

<sup>5</sup> This day Chase also wrote two other letters which were directed to the public and printed pseudonymously in the *Maryland Journal and Baltimore Advertiser* on February 25, 1777. The first, signed "Tom Tell-Truth," feigned "gratitude to the patriotic virtuous King, the august incorruptible Parliament, and wise disinterested Ministry of Britain" for the magnanimous peace terms recently offered to America by General Howe. The second, signed "Caveto" [Beware], warned Americans not to be deceived by "the insidious and wicked Court of Britain, and her artful Agents," from whom they should "expect nothing but Fraud, Force, Rapine, Murder, and Desolation."

Oddly enough, the radical Whig Club of Baltimore believed "Tom Tell-Truth" to be an ardent Loyalist, whose identity they demanded from William Goddard, the person who had received the letters from Chase and had passed them on to his sister Mary Katharine Goddard, printer of the *Journal*. When Goddard refused to reveal Chase's identity, he fell victim to the wrath of the Whig Club and was forced from the city. He thereupon sought the protection of Maryland officials in Annapolis, who denounced the Whig Club and eventually charged its leaders with "high crimes and misdemeanors" and brought them before the Maryland Assembly. A proclamation condemning the Whig Club, issued by Gov. Thomas Johnson on April 17, gave Goddard the public vindication he desired, but he refused to let the matter drop. In addition to publishing broadsides and pamphlets explaining his version of the episode, Goddard submitted a memorial to Congress on May 26, 1777, apparently expecting disciplinary action against some of the Whig Club leaders (several held Continental commissions), but no action was ever taken on his memorial.

For Chase's identity as "Tom Tell-Truth"—who was identified as "a Member of the Honourable Congress" in Goddard's pamphlet *The Prowess of the Whig Club, and the Manoeuvres of Legion*—see Goddard's personal annotated copy of the revised version of *The Prowess of the Whig Club* at MWA, filmed for the "Early American Imprints" series as Evans, *Am. Bibliography*, #15315. For an account of the entire affair, see Ward L. Miner, *William Goddard, Newspaperman* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1962), pp. 152–62. See also *JCC*, 8:385; and *PCC*, item 41, 3:385. Chase's two letters are printed in full in both *The Prowess of the Whig Club* and Miner's *William Goddard*.

## Executive Committee to the Board of War

Gentlemen,

Philada. Feb. 20. 1777

Your Directions of the 7 Inst. respecting the forwarding Gunpowder from hence to Albany would have been observed before now but from the Deficiency of that Article in the publick Stores. A Vessel is now however arrived with Twenty Tons, Private Property, which is purchased on Account of Congress, and will enable Us to comply with the Order. The Waggon Mr. has our Directions to procure the necessary Waggons to carry Twenty Tons, which it shall be our Care shall go forward in the best Order.

We are with great Respect, Your mo. obedt. hum Sts.

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

P.S. On the Powder coming on Shore and the Barrels counted it turns in but about Ten Tons, the first Information respecting the Quantity being wrong. The Waggon Master finds a considerable Difficulty in getting Waggons for conveying it to Albany so that it will not go forward so suddenly as we wished and expected.

RC (PHi). Written by Clymer and signed by Clymer, Morris, and Walton.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sr, Philadelphia, 20th February, -1777.

The enclosed papers were sent to our Office this morning by the Council of Safety for our direction upon the subject matter of their contents: but we have deemed it the more eligible to transmit them to your Excellency and at the same time We beg leave to recal your attention to our letter to you respecting these prisoners wrote some time since. General Gates, who is now present, and to whom we have mentioned them, says that he is of opinion that it is best to delay taking any steps to release or exchange them for a short time, in which we incline to concur.<sup>1</sup>

We are, Sir, with esteem and respect, your Most Obedient Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (MA). Written by Clymer and signed by Clymer, Morris, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:202-3; and Executive Committee to Washington, January 9, 1777.

## John Hancock to Robert Purviance

Mr. Purviance

Thursday 20 Feby 1777

I must beg You will order the *Shott* down to the Wasp immediately, she waits entirely for the Shot.<sup>1</sup> Your attention to this directly will oblige, Your friend,

John Hancock

Tr (MdHi).

<sup>1</sup> Hancock probably wrote this letter in his capacity as a member of the Marine Committee.

## John Hancock to the States

Gentlemen,

Baltimore Feby. 20th. 1777.

In Consequence of the Proceedings of the several Committees from the States of Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island being laid before Congress, they have come to the enclosed Resolves which I am commanded to transmit to you,<sup>1</sup> together with those Parts of their Minutes that relate to the Price of Labour and other Articles.<sup>2</sup>

Altho Congress approve the Measures adopted by that Body to prevent the Depreciation of their Currency (except striking Bills to bear Interest)

yet have they referred to the Consideration of the other States, the Propriety of regulating the Prices of Goods, & at the same Time recommend to them to devise such Expedients as they shall think will be most likely to remedy the Evils occasioned by the exorbitant Prices of Manufactures & all other Articles of Trade.<sup>3</sup> I am therefore to request you will appoint Commissioners to meet at York-Town in Pennsylvania on the third Monday in March next then & there to confer with other Commissioners from the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, & Maryland, on the Subject of adopting such a System of Regulation as may be most suitable to those States.<sup>4</sup> I beg Leave to request your Attention to the whole of the enclosed Resolves, & have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Servt.<sup>5</sup>

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "To the thirteen States."

<sup>1</sup> Remainder of paragraph omitted in letter sent to the New England states.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:124-25; and Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., January 30, 1777, note.

<sup>3</sup> In place of the next sentence, Hancock wrote in his letter to the New England states: "As the emitting Bills with Interest thereon, will have a Tendency to depreciate the Continental & other Currencies, it is the opinion of Congress such a Measure ought by no Means to be adopted."

<sup>4</sup> This sentence, which was placed in brackets in the LB, was drafted for inclusion only in the letter sent to Virginia. The list of states mentioned therein was obviously revised in the letters directed to each of the other five.

<sup>5</sup> In his letter to the Massachusetts Assembly, Hancock added the following postscript: "Your favrs. of 30th Jany & 1 Febry have been Just Rec'd. I have Rec'd Directions from Congress on Tuesday next to Adjourn Congress to Philada. & I should set off for that place on Wednesday mornng." Revolutionary Letters, M-Ar. The letters mentioned by Hancock are not in PCC.

## George Walton to John Hancock

Sir,

Philadelphia, 20th February, 1777

After I had finished the business with the Indians at Easton,<sup>1</sup> I went to visit our Army in New-Jersey, which I found small, but in good spirits; and, from its advantageous situation, I have the best hopes that the enemy will be confined to their present circle during the remainder of the winter. But I observed one thing while I was at the different posts in the army, which calls for the immediate attention of Congress. It is the want of money. "Why does not Congress supply the army with money?" is the general cry. I will venture to assert that, unless this matter is attended to and remedied, without loss of time, the most important ill-consequences will be the issue. Nothing less, I will even venture to predict, than a dissolution of the army.

I am not unapprised of the real cause of the present low state of the Treasury. The experiment of borrowing money at four per cent has been



fairly tried; and the event evidently proves that money can not be got without a higher Interest. In my opinion then, the Interest must be either raised, or the principal surrendered into the hands of our Enemies. For, most assuredly, the whole great cause of this Continent, which we have been so long supporting thro' a multitude of difficulties, depends upon our exertions at this crisis. If it should ever be decided against us, it will be within a few months; and it infallibly will, unless the Commander in chief is supplied with cash.

I have the honor to be, sir, your most Obedient Servant,

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78).

<sup>1</sup>See Executive Committee to John Hancock, January 17, 1777, note 3.

## James Wilson to Arthur St. Clair

My dear Sir

[February 20, 1777] <sup>1</sup>

Yesterday Congress proceeded to the Promotion of General Officers. There was much Difficulty and Delicacy in settling the Principles, on which the Promotions ought to be founded. I expressed my Sentiments in Favour of adhering to the Line of Seni[ority adopt]ed, by Observations which I will not repeat [at present?] to you, that, if it was proper to deviate [from that line], you were the officer, in whose Favour the alteration ought to be made. Lord Stirling, General Mifflin, yourself, General Stevens and General Lincoln were chosen Major Generals. I need not express my Satisfaction at your Promotion. I feel peculiarly pleased that I have seen the Event take Place before I leave Congress.

I am exceedingly hurt that our deserving Friend General Thompson was passed over: It is Misfortune sufficient to be a Prisoner. I am, however, willing to believe that the only Reason, with many Gentlemen, for omitting him was an Apprehension that a Promotion would increase the Difficulty of his Exchange.

If you have not already engaged yourself, you will much oblige me by appointing Billy Bird your Aid de Camp. You will recollect that, when he first entered into the Service, I was solicitous he should be formed under you. You know [however, of his] Activity: He is young: But he is far from [being perfect] in Sense and Judgment. If he is not [yet exch]anged; I hope his Exchange will soon take [place. I] have been informed that he has either obtained or has a Prospect of obtaining a Lieutenancy in the light Horse. But I would, on every Account, prefer what I now recommend him to.

I have good Reason to believe, and think it not improper to hint, that the important Command of Ticonderoga is destined for you next Campaign. I presage it a Theatre of Glory.<sup>2</sup>

RC (OHi). RC damaged; in the hand of James Wilson.

<sup>1</sup> The occasion for this letter was St. Clair's promotion to the rank of major general, which Congress voted on February 19. See *JCC*, 7:133.

<sup>2</sup> Remainder of MS missing.

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Feb. 21. Friday.

Dined Yesterday at Mr. Samuel Purveyances. Mr. Robert his Brother and Lady, the President and Lady, the two Coll. Lees and their Ladies, Mr. Page and his Lady, Coll. Whipple, Mrs. K. Quincy, a young Gentleman and a young Lady made the Company. A great Feast. The Virginia Ladies had Ornaments about their Wrists, which I don't remember to have seen before. These Ornaments were like Miniature Pictures, bound round the Arms with some Chains.

This Morning received a long Card from Mr. H[ancock] expressing great Resentment about fixing the Magazine at Brookfield, against the Book binder and the General.<sup>1</sup> The Complaisance to me and the Jealousy for the Massachusetts in this Message, indicate to me, the same Passion and the same design, with the Journey to B[oston] in April.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:260.

<sup>1</sup>John Hancock's "long Card" has not been found. On the dispute over the location of the Continental magazine at Brookfield, Mass., see Hancock to George Washington, January 29, 1777. The "Book binder" is doubtless Henry Knox, and the "General," George Washington.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Baltimore Feb. 21. 1777

Yesterday, I had the Pleasure of dining with Mr. Purveyance.

There are two Gentlemen of this Name in Baltimore, Samuel and Robert, eminent Merchants, and in Partnership. We had a brilliant Company, the two Mrs. Purveyances, the two Mrs. Lees, the Ladies of the two Colonels R[ichard] H[enry] and F[rancis], Mrs. H[ancock] and Miss Katy [Quincy], and a young Lady that belongs to the Family. If this Letter, like some other wise ones, should be intercepted, I suppose I shall be call'd to Account for not adjusting the Rank of these Ladies a little better.

Mr. H., the two Coll. Lees, Coll. Whipple, Coll. Page, Coll. Ewing, the two Mr. Purveyances, and a young Gentleman. I fancy I have named all the Company.

How happy would this Entertainment have been to me if I could by a single Volition have transported one Lady about five hundred miles. But alas! this a greater Felicity than falls to my share.

We have voted to go to Philadelphia next Week.

We have made General Lincoln a Continental Major General.<sup>1</sup>

We shall make Coll. Glover a Brigadier.<sup>2</sup>

I sincerely wish We could hear more from General Heath. Many Persons are extremely dissatisfied with Numbers of the general Officers of the highest Rank. I dont mean the Commander in Chief, his Character is justly very high, but Schuyler, Putnam, Spencer, Heath, are thought by very few to be capable of the great Commands they hold. We hear of none of their heroic Deeds of Arms. I wish they would all resign.

For my Part I will vote upon the genuine Principles of a Republic for a new Election of general Officers annually, and every Man shall have my Consent to be left out, who does not give sufficient Proof of his Qualifications.

I wish my Lads were old enough. I would send every one of them into the Army, in some Capacity or other. Military Abilities and Experience, are a great Advantage to any Character.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:165–66.

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Lincoln was one of five major generals appointed on February 19. *JCC*, 7:133.

<sup>2</sup> This day Congress promoted ten men, including Jonathan Glover, to brigadier general. *JCC*, 7:141.

## Board of War to George Washington

Sir

War Office Feby 21st 1777

I am directed by the Board of War to inform you that it is the Opinion of Congress that the Men of the Corps of Virginia Light Horse under the Command of Major Bland receive the usual Bounty on their reinlisting for three Years or during the War into the Continental Service.<sup>1</sup>

General Ward having declined the Command of the Eastern Department I have it in Direction to enclose a Copy of his Letter that your Excellency may supply his Place with a proper Successor.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Respect, Your most obed & most humble Servt,

Richard Peters Secy

[P.S.] Enclosed are Copies of a Letter & Return sent by Mr Meesom from Albany.

Congress having resolved to retaliate the Treatment of Genl Lee on the Hessian Field Officers & Col. Campbell the Board would be obliged by your Excellency's Information where the former was sent.<sup>3</sup> Lieut Col. Schaffer, Majors Hanstein & Matthias are at Dumfries & Lt Col.

Bretthauer at Baltimore but the Destination of the rest was not made known, at least is not at present recollected.

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Washington had raised this issue in his February 5 letter to President Hancock. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:103.

<sup>2</sup> On March 3 Washington appointed William Heath to succeed Artemas Ward as commander of the eastern military department. *Ibid.*, 231–32.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:135; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 20, 1777.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feby 21 1777

A letter from General Lee requesting a Committe of Congress to be sent to New York to whom he might, with Permission of Lord and General How, impart Something of great Consequence to himself and of no less, in his Opinion to the public.<sup>1</sup> His letter was in very pressing Terms. It was the General sense of Congress that no Conference ought to be held with any but Embassadors properly authorised by the Court of Britain to treat of Peace. That Lord and General How could have no Powers on such a Subject by virtue of their Commissions which was particularly Limited by Parliament to other Purposes. That any Conference with them would be Impolitic and degrading—degrading because beneath the Dignity of Congress to Treat with persons whose very Powers supposed them objects of their Dominion, and even of their Mercy—Impolitic because it would give an Opportunity of circulating Stories in the Courts of Europe that the Congress were on Treaty of Reconciliation with Britain and by this means suspend for sometime their Intention of befreinding us. But it was also agreed that the Congress ought to give every possible attention to General Lee's personal Safety. The Difficulty was in the mode, some being of opinion it ought to be by permitting any person he pleased to go and Confer with him on any matter relative to his private Business—others that it ought to be by ordering the General to send an Officer for that purpose.<sup>2</sup> At length the Congress came to a resolution to Direct<sup>3</sup> General Washington to Inform General Lee of the measures they were taking for his safety, and to request him to inform them of any thing which they could farther do, but that they could not think it Consistent with the Dignity of Congress to send a Committee to Treat with him on any public Business.

MS (NN). Tr (Nc–Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Lee's February 10 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 158, 1:99–100, and *NYHS Collections* 5 (1872): 358–59.



<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:140–41. It must have been just about this time that Richard Henry Lee wrote the following response to General Lee's request to support his proposal to meet with a committee of Congress. "My feelings are not to be described. I would go to every extremity to serve my friend, and the able friend of liberty and mankind. But here, my power fails. I have not the smallest idea of personal danger, nor does this affect the present question. Farewell my dear friend, may you be as happy as you deserve, and then the cause of humanity will have nothing to fear for you." Lee Family Papers, PPAmP. The general's letter to Richard Henry, undated but obviously written around the same time as his February 10 letter to Hancock, is in Richard H. Lee, *Memoir of the Life of Richard Henry Lee* . . . , 2 vols. (Philadelphia: H. C. Carey and I. Lea, 1825), 1:180–81.

<sup>3</sup> Sentence to this point omitted in Tr.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir Philada. Feby 21st 1777

We have just rec'd the inclosed resolves from Congress which the President desires us to Send forward to you, & we have the pleasure to inform you they are to adjourn next Tuesday from Baltimore to Philadelphia where we hope they may long remain undisturbed, so that the Public business may meet that dispatch which is now become so essentially necessary.

Your Excellency will find herein a letter from the Navy Board requesting the assistance of fifteen or Twenty Rope Makers. They are exceedingly wanted as we have plenty of Hemp which shou'd be Worked up with all possible expedition and We think you will greatly promote the Public Service by directing a Search through the Army for these Men or as many of them as can be got, sending them down & they shall be rewarded to their satisfaction for the service's they perform and may afterwards return to their duty in Camp if it be their duty to return.

With the greatest respect & esteem we remain, Your Excellencys Most Obedt hble servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DLC). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

## Elbridge Gerry to Thomas Gerry

Dear Brother Baltimore Feby 21. 1777

I am favoured with yours of Decr. the 5th & 8th & Jan'y 25th in the last of wch is mentioned another of your Favours of Jan'y 6th which is not yet come to Hand.

I wrote You by several Conveyances, that as the Secret Committee wanted these Cargoes to make Remittances & not to invest in military

Stores, I had concluded not to part with them for that purpose, but to take them on my own Account & interest the State of Massachusetts Bay in part of them if they approved of the proposal; but it is a Matter of no great Consequence that the Bills of Lading ran in the Name of the "united States of America" as I shall correct the Matter in a Letter to our Friends Messrs. Guardoqui's. I am sensible that the Expences of Seamen are at this Time great, but consented to give a Freight in proportion, wch exceeds 6d Sterling the Sum that was first proposed. With respect to Demurrage Colo Ornes Vessel could have none due the 8th Decr. as he loaded after the Betsey Which could not be sent to Sea before the 28th Novr. At any Rate if Demurrage is paid, It must appear that by the Freighter's Neglect the Vessel was detained after she was fitted for the Sea & furnished with her Complement of Men. I have wrote to Mr Trumbull about the 40 [Quintals?] Fish, & suppose he will direct Mr Miller to take your Receipt therefore when opportunity shall offer.

Capt Cole has been successful in the Number of prizes, but I am to think he has lost the most valuable one mentioned in your Letter.

As I am much engaged in public Concerns, & have but little Time to think of other Matters, I shall be glad to have the Board of War informed that Messers. Joseph Gardoqui & sons have recd my Letter, wherein I desired that the Rockingham & Cargo or such a part thereof as was recovered from the Seizure might be sold & the Money improved at Interest untill they should hear from the State or myself on the Matter; & that part of the Cargo of powder was on Hand when the Letter was wrote, wch I shall order to be sent forward if not sold before Advices can reach them from hence.

Congress have taken up the Affair of the post office & It will be properly attended to untill the post Master General shall cause it to be better regulated. Capt Tucker is here & your Recommendation will be improved when Oppertunity offers to his Advantage.<sup>1</sup> My Regards to Mrs. Gerry, my little Friends & the Family at large & beleive me to be wth Esteem yours sincerely,

E Gerry

P.S. When Business will permit pray inclose an abstract of my Account Current.

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Congress appointed Samuel Tucker a navy captain on March 15, 1777. *JCC*, 7:183.

## Robert Morris to John Hancock

Dear sir

Philada. Feby 21st. 1777

Both your favours of the 18th are delivered to me, the first came to hand last Night after dark & this Morning early I sent an order to

Hiltziemer for the four Waggon strongly enjoining him to send the best and Mr Brown went up to enforce the message, but he says it is not possible to get them off before Monday Morning and that then they will go well equipped. The Resolves are gone to the General & before now you have an Answer to your dispatches of 10th Jany. I have told Mr. Tailor to inform me if he wants any assistance & you may depend on his meeting it directly. I fancy he will get your old House (D. Williams) for you. I thank you most kindly for your Friendly offers respecting Mrs. Morris but as you have three Females to take care of, I think it wou'd be a shame to give you trouble & I have sent home one of my Clerks with a Carriage & Horses to bring up my Family before the Delegates begin to move because Crowded roads make bad accomodations for everybody. I hope Mrs. Morris & my little flock will be here before you & blame myself that I did not gratify my own inclination & send for them long since. Pray tell Mr Thompson I sent his letter for Somerville to Mrs Morris's & tell Mr Burke I will engage lodgings for him if I can & believe there is not much danger but you'll find every thing much dearer than formerly, or rather *Money* worth less.

I have really had my hands, Head & Heart full business since I saw you but thank God my Spirits never failed.

I hope soon to take you by the hand & pass that social hour that gives an honest soul more real joy, than all the follies & Vanitys in the World. I wish you & the Ladies a pleasant Journey & am Dr sir Your affectionate  
hble servt. Robt Morris

Feby 22d. What a Cursed change since last night but never fear they shall not come here. I refer to the letters by Express to Congress,<sup>1</sup> & am Dr  
sir Yours, Robt Morris

RC (NjMoHP).

<sup>1</sup> For General Washington's letters to Congress of February 20, one of which reported "we have strong reason to believe that the Enemy are on the point of making some push," see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:168-71. See also *JCC*, 7:148-50; and Hancock to Washington, February 25, 1777, postscript.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

[February 21, 1777.]<sup>1</sup>

Congress received a letter Feby 20th 1777 from Genl Lee<sup>2</sup> a prisoner in New York (written by permission of Lord & general Howe) requesting a conference with two or three members of congress upon matters of the last importance to himself, & in his opinion to America, upon which it was said by

Dr. Rush. Mr President, In considering of the propriety of this request it becomes us 1 to attend to the present situation of the court of

Britain, 2ly to the conduct & charecters of Lord & general Howe, and 3 to the conduct, & charrecter of general Lee. 1 The court of Britain is alarmed with the fear of a French war. They wish to terminate the present war in America by a negociation as well as by the sword. They have no terms to offer us. They mean only to deceive & divide us. 2 Lord & genl Howe were chosen as fit instruments for seducing & deceiving the colonies. They have practised many Arts for that purpose. Witness the conference they extorted from the congress thro' Genl Sullivan last summer. They have been told by the reinforcement of tories that lately joined them its effect upon the people of America, & they expect thro' a better instrument (Genl Lee) to produce greater & worse effects by a conference with the members of congress set on foot at their request by the general. 3 General Lee with all his great qualities possesses the weakness of being easily imposed upon. His charecters of men are dictated by caprice or passion. I have seldom known him give a *true* charecter of any man. He is fond of negotiations & conferences. He tried to bring about an interview with Genl Burgoyne at Cambridge for that purpose. He urged a second interview with Lord Howe last summer. I believe Gen Lee to be honest & sincerely attached to our cause, but some people suppose he threw himself in the way of being taken prisoner. Considering all these things I maintain that a compliance with the general[s] request would be impolitic, & highly dangerous to the union & safety of the united States.

Mr. Jno Adams. Mr President, I am against the proposed conference. It will do mischief. The last conference with Lord Howe did no good. The Whigs were alarmed with it, and the tories complained that the reason why it did not end in a negociation was because improper men were sent, and because the congress did not relax eno' from its dignity. I admire Genl Lee for his military talents, but he possesses an unbounded Share of Vanity. This Vanity led him to correspond with Genl Burgoyne—and induced him to propose himself as one of a committee to confer with Lord Howe. His Lordship has no terms to offer us. The kings Speech is *decisive* against us. It lets loose all the dogs of war & corruption upon us, But it carries a remedy to its terrors along with it—it holds out the probability of a war wth. France.

Mr Chase. I am against the conference, but I move for the publication of Genl Lee's letter to the congress in order to satisfy our constituents who have heard that it contains propositions of peace.

Mr. Middleton. I am against the conference for the reasons that have been given. Lord Howe has made use of Genl. Lee as a decoy duck to take in the colonies. I am against the publication of the General[s] letter to the congress, Unless you publish with it his letter to Genl Washington in which he requests the company of his Aid de camp and his dogs.

Col Harrison. I suspect Lord & General Howe have offered Genl Lee his life on condition of his bringing About this conference which is de-



signed to betray us into a negociation. It will suspend our military Operations, and injure us in the court of France where our Commissioners are now soliciting an Alliance for us. The last conference with Lord Howe had this effect. Let us suppose that he means only to confer with us about his private affairs, and let us pass a resolution declaring our determination to support him & our willingness to hear & transact any thing that related to his safety or interest.

This resolution was unanimously agreed to.

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

<sup>1</sup> Burnett dated this entry February 20 because General Lee's February 10 letter to Congress, the subject of these notes, was received and read on that day, but it seems clear that the debates Rush noted here actually took place on February 21. The journals indicate that Lee's letter was ordered to "lie on the table" after it was read and that it was not taken "into consideration" until the following day. Thomas Burke's notes of debates for these two days, which unlike Rush's are clearly dated, discuss Lee's letter on the latter date only. And the resolution noted as "unanimously agreed to" in Rush's concluding paragraph was adopted on February 21. See Burnett, *Letters*, 2:263; *JCC*, 7:134, 140-41; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 20 and 21, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Lee's letters to General Washington of February 9 and to President Hancock of February 10, 1777, are in PCC, item 158, fols. 97-100; and *NYHS Collections* 5 (1872): 357-59.

## John Adams to John Sullivan

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feb. 22. 1777

I had this Evening the Pleasure of your Favour of the fourteenth instant, and a great Pleasure it was, as it was an Evidence that my old Friends were beginning to recollect me.<sup>1</sup> I have been So long absent that I Seemed to have lost all my Correspondents in the Army.

It would be, at all Times an obligation upon me, to hear of the Motions of the Armies, and of our prosperous or adverse Situations, of our good or ill Success.

The Account you give of the good Behaviour of our Countrymen is very pleasing to me, but it is equally So to hear of the good Behaviour of the Troops of any other State in the Union. It is good Behaviour that I wish to hear of, and it is quite immaterial to me where the officer or Man was born or where he lives, provided he behaves ill. The sordid Prejudices, which are carefully fomented, and the malicious slanders, which are industriously propagated, I both despise and detest, if Contempt and Hatred can exist together.

In Truth, my old Friend, I wish to hear, more than I do, of the Vigilance, Activity, Enterprise, and Valour of Some of our New England Generals, as well as others. What is the Army at Providence about? What

is become of the Army at Peek's Kill, or on the white Plains? What Numbers have they? Are We to go on forever in this Way? maintaining vast Armies in Idleness? and loosing the fairest opportunity that ever offered, of destroying an Enemy compleatly in our Power? We have no Returns of any Army. We know not what Force is on Foot any where. Yet We have Reason to believe that our Constituents are paying for a very great Force.

Posterity will never blame the Men. They will lay all their Censures upon the General officers. All History has done so, and future Historians will do the same. The general officers, if they understand themselves, and have a Suitable Code of military Laws, will make a good Army, if you give them human Nature only, to work upon. It behoves you all then to look out. I don't mean this as a Censure, but as a Stimulus. I hope to hear from you, often, and wishing you as many Laurels as you please, I remain, Your Friend.

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Sullivan's February 14 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

## Executive Committee to Benjamin Flower

Sir,

Feb'y 22. 1777

You are hereby directed to have all Military and other publick stores now in this City and under your care or custody, put into a proper situation to be removed on the shortest notice, this being consistent with the frequent recommendations from His Excellency General Washington and with our own opinion of that prudence and precaution that ought to prevail in all the Continental business, but as this is merely precautionary you will be careful to conduct it, so as not to give any unnecessary alarm to the Inhabitants. The Quarter Master General will give the needfull Assistance from his department and we are sir, yr. hble serts.<sup>1</sup>

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Addressed: "To Colo. Benj. Flower, Commissary of Military Stores or if absent to his deputy or deputies."

<sup>1</sup> This day the Executive Committee also sent letters to the same effect to Commissaries James Mease and Carpenter Wharton, Continental agent John Maxwell Nesbitt, and the navy board in Philadelphia. PCC, item 133, fols. 90-94. The last letter is also in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1261.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir,

Philada Feb'y 22d. 1777

We are much Concerned at the necessity of writing you in a Stile so different to what we have lately used respecting the removal of Congress

to this City, but an Express arrived late last Night from Genl. Washington with advice to Genl. Gates that the Enemy have received very considerable reinforcements in New-Jersey & that Genl. Howe & Lord Percy arrived at Brunswick last Thursday with a Number of Troops & some heavy artillery.<sup>1</sup> This latter circumstance indicates offensive War & it is possible they may have it in View to move this way altho' we cannot Conceive how they are to bring those Canon or sufficient Provisions, Forage & Stores for such an Expedition unless they depend on driving Genl Washington from his Posts & supplying themselves in the unravaged parts of New Jersey. It has often been reported & some of the Tories have said with Confidence that a Number of Gondolo's have been built or are building at New York. If this be true it is possible they may mediate an attack by Water & think of overpowering the Gondolo's of this State so as to get the Command of the Chevaux de Frize & then transport their army across Delaware. This is meer suggestion founded on the Impossibility of their Crossing the River without such aid. We shall therefore give the Council of Safety Notice to be prepared & such Continental Vessells as are here shall be on the Watch ready to give their assistance. Upon the whole we don't think the Enemy can move this way suddenly & rather imagine their first view must be to drive Genl. Washington from his Posts, Seize Horses & Forage, which being effected they may turn their longing Eyes this way. Therefore as the fate of War is uncertain We dispatch this in haste hoping it may be with you before Congress is adjourned & we think under present appearances they had better remain untill the real design of Mr Howe is made evident. This Moment we have recd the enclosed from Genl Washington & send it forward immediately that you may see his opinion of things.<sup>2</sup> We shall now give orders for having the Public Stores in readiness to be removed, but cautiously avoid giving any great alarm. We are more uneasy at the scene of inoculation lately introduced amongst our New Troops than at any other thing as it makes us weak & will keep us so for some time. With the utmost respect & Esteem We remain, sir,  
Your Obedt hble servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7: 163–65, 176–78.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 168–69.

## Executive Committee to Thomas Mifflin

Sir,

February 22nd 1777

In consequence of a recommendation from his Excellency General Washington, We have Issued orders to John Nixon, Francis Hopkinson &

John Wharton Esqr. Board of Assistants to the Marine Committee, Carpenter Wharton Esqr. Commissary of Provisions, Benjamin Flower esqr. Commissary of Military Stores, James Mease esqr. Cloathier General & John Maxwell Nesbitt Esqr. Continental Agent to hold all publick monies, goods and Stores under their care and custody respectively in readiness to be removed on the shortest notice with assurance that you would supply them with waggons and every assistance from your department.<sup>1</sup> We therefore give you this notice of Said orders, requesting your compliance with such part as depends you, and having told the several Parties that this is a precautionary measure we requested prudence and discretion might be used in the execution to prevent any unnecessary Alarm to the Inhabitants and we recommend the same to you. The Commissary of Provisions will remove his Stores to the Magazines ordered by the General immediately and you will take effectual measures to provide for the Safety of the Horses and Waggons, Forage & Stores under your direction.

We are sir, Yr. Obedt. Servts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133). Addressed: "To Brigdr. General Mifflin, Quarter Master General."

<sup>1</sup> See Executive Committee to Benjamin Flower, this date.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Feby 22d. 1777

We have dispatched an express to Congress this morning with your letter of the 20th which will be with them in time to prevent their adjournment next Tuesday from Baltimore. We have had a Conference with the Council of Safety and after Communicating to them the intelligence Contained in your Excellencys letters to Genl Gates and that to Congress We requested them to give immediate orders for putting all their Force by Water into the best posture they possibly can, we also advised their Collecting such of the Militia as have not been in actual service into such readiness, as to be subject to immediate orders, this can be done without giving any alarm, or at least any general alarm. Genl Gates will station proper officers at New Town and give orders respecting the Boats on the Jersey side of Delaware, the present Cold Weather has made so much Ice in the River & Creeks that they cannot be brought over, therefore if any sudden movements of the Enemy make it necessary, they must all be destroyed. We read with much concern one paragraph in your Excellencys letters to Genl. Gates relative to the removal of the public Stores, in which you are pleased to cast a blame that we do not deserve.<sup>1</sup> Every requisition & recommendation of yours has been strictly and instantly attended to by this Committee. We have complied with



your wishes in every instance & done all that our situation wou'd enable to promote the public Service in every line that came under our Notice. 'Tis true that our judgment was against removing the public Stores from this City since your success at Trenton & Prince Town for various reasons that are not necessary to enumerate at this time, but not depending on our own judgement or inclination, We stated to Congress your recommendations on that Subject & our opinion with some reasons in support of it & they were pleased to order them to remain untill other events shou'd happen that might make a removal necessary & now Sir that You again recommend this business, We will give immediate orders to every department to hold the Stores in readiness to be carried away at an hours warning. Thus much we thought necessary to say in our own defence, assuring your Excellency at the same time that no board ever did or will pay more attention to your recommendations than this Committee.

With the most ardent wishes for your success & glory, We remain your Excellencys most devoted & obedt hble servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DLC). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:164.

## John Hancock to Certain Continental Officers

Sir, Baltimore Feby. 22d. 1777.

The Congress having been pleased to promote you to the Rank of Major General in the Army of the United States, I do myself the Pleasure to enclose your Commission.<sup>1</sup> Confident of your Ardour in the Cause of America, and of your Attachment to her Liberties, I am persuaded, you will on all Occasions, shew yourself every Way deserving the Honour your Country has now conferred upon you.

With the warmest Wishes for your Health & Prosperity, I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

J. H. Presid.

[P.S.] You will please to acknowledge the Receipt of this Letter & Commission.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "To Major Genl. Lord Stirling. Major Genl. Thomas Mifflin. Major Genl. Arthur St. Clair. Major Genl. Adam Stephen. Major Genl. Benjamin Lincoln."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:133; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 12–19, 1777.

## Benjamin Rush to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feby. 22. 1777

The question for raising the interest of our loan office tickets to 6 per cent. was attempted again the day before yesterday in Congress but was lost as formerly by a division of the States. Every post and express that arrives brings us complaints of the want of money, and assurances of the impossibility of getting it as the low interest of 4 per cent. These complaints are echoed daily from every corner of the room but to no purpose. The States that oppose the raising of the interest are Rhode Island, Connecticut, North and South Carolinas, and Georgia. Maryland is divided. It is worthy of notice here that only seven members of the congress who represent five of the above States decided the above question, contrary to the inclinations of not less than 17 members who represented the States that voted for raising the interest, and who represent at least 2/3rds of the people of America. This unjust mode of representation I hope will be altered in the confederation. If it is not it will end sooner or later in the ruin of the Continent. We shall attempt the important question once more before we adjourn to Philada. If we fail we are undone. Another emission of money will in my opinion be a public fraud which no *State-necessity* can justify. The loss of two or three provinces would not hurt our cause half so much as the news of our bankruptcy.

The Congress have concluded *unanimously* not to send a deputation of their body to General Lee.<sup>1</sup> The present distracted situation of the Court of Britain, the characters and conduct of Lord and General Howe, and the disposition which Genl. Lee always shewed for negotiations, and conferences with the General Officers belonging to the british Army induced the Congress readily to adopt a suspicion that the royal Commissioners had suggested the manœuvre in order to suspend our military operations, and to divide and deceive the States. This suspicion was rendered the more probable from the circumstances of *this*, being about the time in which our Commissioners at the Court of France will urge the necessity of a speedy declaration in our favor, and which can only be prevented by the news that we are negotiating with Great Britain. It is well known the conference with Lord Howe last summer had well nigh ruined our interest at the Court of France. The Congress have passed a resolution that will we hope satisfy the General that while we are jealous of our honor, we are determined to neglect nothing that concerns his safety, or private affairs.

We have yesterday appointed Colonels Poor, Glover, Patterson, Varnum, Wayne, Dehaes, Muhlenberg, Weedon, Jno. Cadwallider and Woodford Brigadiers General. Lord Sterling, with Messrs Mifflin, Sinclair, Steven and Lincoln are Majors General.

I am Dr Sir with great respect, Your most obedt Servant,  
B. Rush

Tr (DLC). Burnett, *Letters*, 2:270-71.

<sup>1</sup>For Congress' response to Gen. Charles Lee's letters on this subject, see Rush's Notes of Debates, February 21; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 21, 1777.

Secret Committee to Robert Purviance and  
Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Sirs                      In secret Committee at Baltimore, 22nd Feb. 1777.

Enclosed is an order for one bbl. of Powder for the Brig. Friendship which you will please to deliver immediately to Mr. Fitzsimons that he may apply to the Commissary for the same as the Brig only waits for the powder in order to sail.

You'll please to observe that it is the resolve of the Committee that this Brig take no more than four 4 pounders 4 swivills & 6 muskets, the remainder to be left in your custody till called for by the Committee. You'll take the Captain or owner's receipt for these warlike stores delivered him.

Richard Henry Lee

Richard Henry Lee

Wm. Whipple

Francis Lewis

MS not found; reprinted from George C. Thomas, ed., *Autograph Letters and Autographs of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence* (Philadelphia: privately printed, 1908), no pagination.

William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir, Baltimore 22d Feby 1777

I have receiv'd your favor of the 15 Ult. The intolerable delays & uncertainty of the Post has prevented my writing so often as I should otherwise have done, but I hope an effectual remedy will speedily be apply'd to this evil when our correspondence will meet with less interruption. I am sorry your Health will not admit of your returning to Congress. My Colleague<sup>1</sup> seems determin'd on taking his departure in May, at which time I am very desirous of returning also. In short no pecuniary advantage woud induce me to tarry even to the end of that month. I therefore hope to have leave to go home the beginning of May. After repeated requisitions of Genl. Washington, Congress have made a number of Genl. Officers. The Gens Proposal is that there shod be a

Major Genl. to every three Brigades and a Brigadier every three Regiments. He also propos'd three Leiut Genls but this I believe will not be speedily complied with as its the general opinion in Congress that the Senior Major Genl. may answer the purpose for the present. Five are added to the list of Major Genls. and ten to the list of Brigadier. Among the latter is Col. Poor who was strongly recommended by Genl. Gates as well as by the Commander in Chief.<sup>2</sup> This will make a vacancy in your late arangement which I hope will be well fill'd. I only wish that real merit may influence the choice. I am fearful that sending men off in small Parties will be injurious to the recruiting service, as sending part of a company will backward the inlistments to compleat it. I hope proper care will be taken to send good Surgeons as much depends on them. Morgan & Stringer are both displac'd, & the Medical Department will be put on a very different footing from what it was last Campaign.<sup>3</sup> You are sensible of the necessity of a reformation particularly in that department & I hope great care will be taken in the appointment of Regimental Surgeons. I also hope proper measure will be persu'd by each state to furnish their respective Soldiers with cloathing for notwithstanding every method that can be taken by Congress, there will be but a scanty supply unless the different states pay particular attention to their own men.

Inclos'd is a copy of a letter from Genl. Lee which gave me no small uneasiness when I first heard of it least some might think it expedient to comply with the request, but to my great joy when it came before Congress there did not appear one advocate for the measure, it evidently appearing to be a scheme of those incendiaries (the two Howe's) to amuse & slaken our measures, but they are disapointed! Lee at the same time wrote to Genl. Washington desiring him to send one of his aids de camps to him & his dogs which I suppose the Genl has comply'd with. Soon after Lee was taken Genl W—— was directed to offer six Field officers for him, that being the price of a Major Genl. and at the same time to assure Howe that the treatment that Lee receiv'd shod be exactly retaliated on them, which promise I hope will be religiously adher'd to! <sup>4</sup>

Nothing material has lately happen'd in the army. We hear frequently of small Skirmishes in which we always have the advantage. The Enemy are closely confin'd to Brunswick & are put to great difficulties for forage &c but our army is not strong enough to attack them. The Southern troops are daily joining the Army, & all that have not had the small Pox are inoculated in their way. I cod wish that measure were adopted with the Eastern troops. I think it might be done without loosing much time. We are still anxiously expecting Intelligence from Europe. The Randolph is at last gone to sea & the Delaware I expect will soon follow her. The Virginia is nearly ready also but I have nothing of the Frigates at the Northward. Congress have determin'd to adjourn to Philaa next Tuesday so you may expect my next will be from that place. In the meantime be



assured that I am with great Respect Your very affece Friend & Hume  
Sert, Wm. Whipple

RC (NhD).

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Thornton.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:133, 138–39, 141–42.

<sup>3</sup> Drs. John Morgan and Samuel Stringer were dismissed on January 9, 1777. *JCC*, 7:24–25. On February 27 the Medical Committee brought in an extensive report for reforming that department, which was repeatedly discussed and finally adopted on April 7 and 8. *JCC*, 7:161–64, 197, 206, 219, 225, 227, 231–37, 244–46.

<sup>4</sup> See Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates, February 21, 1777.

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Feb. 23.

Took a Walk with Mr. Gerry, down to a Place called Ferry Branch, a Point of Land which is formed by a Branch of the Patapsco on one Side and the Basin before the Town of Baltimore on the other. At the Point is a Ferry, over to the Road which goes to Anapolis. This is a very pretty Walk. At the Point you have a full view of the elegant, splendid Seat of Mr. Carroll Barrister. It is a large and elegant House. It stands fronting looking down the River, into the Harbour. It is one Mile from the Water. There is a most beautifull Walk from the House down to the Water. There is a descent, not far from the House. You have a fine Garden—then you descend a few Steps and have another fine Garden—you go down a few more and have another. It is now the dead of Winter, no Verdure, or Bloom to be seen, but in the Spring, Summer, and fall this Scæne must be very pretty.

Returned and dined with Mr. William Smith a new Member of Congress. Dr. Lyon, Mr. Merriman, Mr. Gerry, a son of Mr. Smith, and two other Gentlemen made the Company. The Conversation turned, among other Things, upon removing the Obstructions and opening the Navigation of Susquehannah River. The Company thought it might easily be done, and would open an amazing Scæne of Business. Philadelphia will oppose it, but it will be the Interest of a Majority of Pensilvania to effect it.

This Mr. Smith is a grave, solid Gentleman, a Presbyterian by Profession—a very different Man from the most of those We have heretofore had from Maryland.

The Manners of Maryland are somewhat peculiar. They have but few Merchants. They are chiefly Planters and Farmers. The Planters are those who raise Tobacco and the Farmers such as raise Wheat &c. The Lands are cultivated, and all Sorts of Trades are exercised by Negroes, or by transported Convicts, which has occasioned the Planters and Farmers

to assume the Title of Gentlemen, and they hold their Negroes and Convicts, that is all labouring People and Tradesmen, in such Contempt, that they think themselves a distinct order of Beings. Hence they never will suffer their Sons to labour or learn any Trade, but they bring them up in Idleness or what is worse in Horse Racing, Cock fighting, and Card Playing.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:260-61.

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Sir,

Baltimore Feby 23rd 1777

As the State of the Army is by no Means such as could be wished, and in Point of Discipline and Order has suffered much since you relinquished the Department of Adjutant General, In Confidence therefore that *you* will retrieve it, and place it again on a respectable Footing, I am directed by Congress earnestly to solicit you to reassume the Office of Adjutant General, with your present Rank and Pay.<sup>1</sup>

The Good of the Service, which is so essentially concerned in your complying with the Desire of Congress on this Occasion, will, I make no Doubt, induce you to gratify their Wishes. At the same Time I am persuaded, you will always add to your own Happiness whenever you can any Ways promote the Cause of American Liberty and Independence. I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, Your most obed. & very hble Serv.

John Hancock Pres.

RC (NHi). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Gates hesitated to accept the post of adjutant general, apparently desirous of an independent command, and before he came to a decision Congress placed him in command of the army at Ticonderoga on March 25. See *JCC*, 7:136, 202; Hancock to Gates, March 25, 1777; and Paul D. Nelson, *General Horatio Gates: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), pp. 78-80.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore Feby. 23. 1777

Your favrs. to 19th Feby. I have Rec'd. The latter was deliver'd me last Eveng. As I shall so soon be with you shall not make a particular Reply. Before this I hope the Money is with you. Marine Matters shall not Touch upon; the Books & papers of that Depàrtment you will please to keep with you, & wish on our first meeting at Philada. we may enter with Spirit & Dispatch on Marine Business, & put things on respectable footing; I think there is an absolute necessity of a Reform in many instances, but more when I have the pleasure of Seeing you. Capt Nichol-

son I have an high Opinion of, I dare Say he will answer the Expectation of Congress. I like his Frig[at]e much. I have Dispatch'd the North Carolina Express after Sendg him to Col Lee for the Money you mention. I shall not by this address the Come. as I am much Engag'd in Dispatchg Expresses to all the States, and must begin to Pack up, I hope the Wag-gons will be here to morrow.

The Inclos'd for Genl Washington, I leave open for your perusal as also the Resolves Inclos'd, after Reading please to Seal & Send by Express to him with the other Letters for the Genl Officers. The Letters to Gates & Mifflin please to deliver to them.

I have a deal to Say, but must wait untill I meet you, till when, Adieu & beleive me, Your affectione Friend,

John Hancock

[P.S.] You will please to order the Horse brought by Mr Barry to be deliver'd into the Continental Stable, it is the horse Mr Rush took out, & you will order a fresh Continental Horse to be deliver'd to Mr Barry. He is going Express to Boston. The Saddle & Bridle is mine.

RC (NN-B).

## John Hancock to Philip Schuyler

Feby. 23d. [1777]

I am reduced to the last Moment, and have only Time to refer you to the enclosed Resolves.<sup>1</sup> The Congress will adjourn from Baltimore to Philada. on Tuesday next, & as I shall set out on Wednesday, you will please to direct your Letters for me at Philada. I have the Honour to be, with perfect Esteem, Sir, your most obed. Serv.

J.H. Presid.

LB (DNA: item 12A). A continuation of Hancock to Schuyler, February 6, 1777.

<sup>1</sup>For the resolves pertaining to the northern army passed by Congress since Hancock last wrote to Schuyler on February 6, see *JCC*, 7:107, 109, 111, 126-27.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Baltimore Feby 23d. 1777.

I have the Honour to enclose you sundry Resolves of Congress, to which I have only Time to refer your Attention, nor indeed, is any Thing further necessary as they are so very explicit.<sup>1</sup>

I have forwarded Commissions to the Majors General, and shall forward, by the next Opportunity, Commissions for the Brigadiers General.

As I am empowered to adjourn the Congress from Baltimore to Philada. on next Tuesday, and shall set out myself on Wednesday, I must request

you will please to direct your Letters to me at Philada., the Powers of the Committee of Congress in that Place expiring on our Arrival there.

I have wrote to Genl. Gates requesting him to resume the Office of Adjutant Genl. nor have I any Doubt of his Compliance. I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Hancock sent Washington a variety of resolves on military affairs passed on February 5, 7, 13-14, and 19-22. See *JCC*, 7:90, 98, 114, 119, 133, 135-36, 140-42.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feby 24th [1777]

A Letter from General Washington was read Informing Congress that General How and Lord Piercy had come over from New York to Brunswick with a reinforcement of Troops and heavy Artillery, that he apprehended the Enemy Intended to enlarge their Quarters and procure Forage in Jersey or to march towards Philadelphia, that he was not in a Condition to prevent either.<sup>1</sup> The Congress went into a Committee of the whole hereupon—and General Washington was ordered to call to his aid all the Continental Troops under General Heath on the North side of the River, and all that were in Providence, to write letters to all the Collonels in the States North of Maryland ordering them to send the recruits to Join him as fast as they were raised, except such regiments as were destined for the Northern Department.<sup>2</sup> The Board of War was ordered to write similar letters to all the other States North of North Carolina, and the State of New York was requested to supply the place of General Heath with Militia.<sup>3</sup> New Jersey and Pensylvania were also requested to reinforce General Washington with Militia from each.<sup>4</sup>

To this report of the Committee of the whole was subjoined a Declaration of Congress that it was their Intention to reinforce the General so as to enable him not only to Curb and Confine the Enemy within their present Quarters but with the Blessing of God Entirely to subdue them before they are reinforced. This pompous Paragraph was very much Condemned by some Gentlemen as an unworthy Gasconade—and it was warmly debated. North Carolina observed that Threats were unbecoming a Private Gentleman, and much more unbecoming a Political<sup>5</sup> Body, That this pompous boast if not realized would render the Congress exceedingly ridiculous, and there was great reason to fear it would not. That our vigor ought to appear by Efforts, not Words, that at best it was a useless superfluity and ought to be expunged. The Question was put and Jersey, Pensylvania, North Carolina and South Carolina voted for expunging, the rest for retaining.<sup>6</sup> N.B. Maryland was not represented.<sup>7</sup>



There appeared upon this whole debate a great desire in the Delegates<sup>8</sup> of the Eastern States, and in one of New Jersey to Insult the General. Georgia always votes with Connecticut and is no other<sup>9</sup> use in the Congress.

MS (NN). Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's February 20 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 3:533-34, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:168-69.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:149.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:149-50; and Hancock to the New York Convention, February 25, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> See Hancock to William Livingston, February 25, 1777. In place of the preceding three sentences in the MS, the Tr reads: "The Congress ordered General Washington to call to his aid the Continental Troops under General Heath, and in Providence, and letters were ordered to be written to the Colonels of the Battalions North of N. Carolina, ordering them to send their troops by companies, and parts of companies as fast as they could be got ready, to join the General, except such as were destined to Ticonderoga. N. York was requested to send detachments of their militia to supply the place of General Heath. New Jersey & Pennsylvania were also requested to reinforce the General with militia."

<sup>5</sup> "Public" in Tr.

<sup>6</sup> "The four Eastern States, Virginia, Georgia for retaining" in Tr.

<sup>7</sup> This sentence omitted in Tr.

<sup>8</sup> "In some of the Delegates" in Tr.

<sup>9</sup> "Further" in Tr. Lyman Hall, the only Georgia delegate present in Baltimore at this time, was a native of Connecticut who had lived there for about the first thirty years of his life before moving to Georgia in the 1750s. *DAB*.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to Henry Johnson

Sir <sup>1</sup>

Baltimore Feby 24th. 1777

You will receive herewith a packet directed to the Commissioners from the United States of America at Paris, and you are to proceed therewith (so soon as you have receiv'd your Letter of Credit from the secret Committee of Congress) either to Nantes or Bourdeaux in France, as the circumstances of wind and weather will permit.<sup>2</sup> When you arrive you will immediately apply to the Continental Agent to whom you shall be directed by the secret Committee, and from him you will receive information where the Commissioners are to be met with in Paris, to which place you are to proceed with the greatest dispatch by Post, and deliver the Packet to the Commissioners or one of them with your own hands, and from them you are to receive your directions in every respect touching your return, and the Cargo if any that you are to bring with you. You may take the advice of the agent whether it will be proper for your Vessel to remain in Port where you arrive at, or to meet you at any other Port on your return from Paris. The Agent will furnish you

with money to defray your expences to Paris, and to supply the Lexington with what necessaries she may want. You are desired to be silent in that Country about the place you are going to, and immediately to place your Packet in a Bag with weight that you may be sure of sinking it if you should be in danger of being certainly taken. The British Emmisaries in France are very inquisitive about all Vessels and Persons coming from America, and therefore you will be very cautious of talking with any Person concerning the place from whence you came, where you are going, or what is your Business. You will receive from the Secret Committee directions touching the change of your pig Iron ballast for any other they may direct you to receive. If any good opportunity occurs you will let this Committee know how you proceed, and where you are; your letters may be direced to the Honorable Benj. Harrison Esqr Chairman of the Committee of Secret Correspondence at Philadelphia. We wish you a good Voyage and safe return and are, your Hble Servts,

Benja Harrison

Richard Henry Lee

RC (PRO: CO 5, 7). Written by Lee and signed by Lee and Harrison.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Johnson, former captain of the privateer *Yankee*, had only recently returned to the United States after escaping from imprisonment on H.M.S. *Rippon*. He was appointed commander of the *Lexington* on February 5, 1777, and after leaving Baltimore on February 26, he reached Bordeaux on April 3. Johnson participated in a successful European cruise with Capt. Lambert Wickes, but after a forced departure from France he was captured again on September 19. Early the next year he escaped from Mill Prison and returned to the United States. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 6:529, 538-39, 581, 7:1024; *JCC*, 7:90; and William Bell Clark, *Lambert Wickes Sea Raider and Diplomat* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932), pp. 191-202, 352-53, 358-62.

<sup>2</sup> The Secret Committee's correspondence with Johnson has not been found. But a Marine Committee letter to Johnson of February 21, instructing him "to put Yourself under the Direction of the Committee of Secret Correspondence & to obey such Orders as You shall receive from them," had been retained and was also captured with this letter. Most of the correspondence taken when the *Lexington* was captured in September was forwarded to the Admiralty, but the Marine Committee's routine instructions remained with the "ships papers" among the various prize documents that were generated as the case of the *Lexington* proceeded through the Admiralty courts. See Benjamin Franklin Stevens, comp., *B. F. Stevens's Facsimiles of Manuscripts in European Archives Relating to America, 1773-1783*, 2107 facsim. in 24 portfolios (London: Photographed and printed by Malby & Sons, 1889-95), nos. 1689, 1699; and High Court of Admiralty Papers 32 (388/10), PRO.

## Executive Committee to Horatio Gates

Dear sir

Philada. Feby 24th. 1777

The bearer Colo. Hollingsworth applies to us for Arms for a Regiment of Maryland Militia Commanded by Colo Rumsey. We are of opinion

that Issue's of this kind had best be made by orders or Warrants from the Commanding officer here. You know that Colo Flower had the immediate care of all Arms & Ammunition, & that Genl Washington desires Copies of the receipts for all Arms put into the hands of Militia with proper returns thereof, in order that they may be accounted for after the times of service expire. Colo Hollingsworth asks to have some arms belonging to the men appraised that they may be paid for if lost, this we think is proper & you will judge of the propriety of his other requests. The sooner they go forward the better as its probable that more strength is now wanted in the Jerseys. We are Dr sir, Your obed servts,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

P.S. We have ordered a little Broth at Smiths & shall live Cool. Can Mrs. Gates Spare you, or will you join us.

RC (MH-H). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

## John Adams to William Tudor

Dear sir

Baltimore Feb. 25. 1777

I had last Evening yours of the 12 Instant.<sup>1</sup> Am much obliged to you for it. Why did not the Court martial find Buckner guilty of Cowardice? Why did they only cashier him? When shall We have any Discipline? When shall We be decisive? When shall We punish the worst Crimes with the last Punishment?

I shall very soon become as clamorous an Advocate for order, Subordination, Government, and Discipline, as ever Philanthrop was,<sup>2</sup> indeed I am already.

I am extreemly mortified that those worthy Men, who Staid for Six weeks, from the 1 of Jany, were obliged to go home unpaid. If I could explain to those honest Men the true Causes of this, they would acquiesce but I cannot. But they will be paid.

Am glad to hear that the Army in Brunswick, are in a good Way. I hope We shall demolish them. We must. We will. Twenty thousand Men are not necessary for this. But I hope never the less, you will have that number and more by the Time you mention.

I wish I could learn what Forces you have, at Morris Town, Chatham, Elisabeth Town, Princeton &c &c &c.

What has Heath done? How many Men has he?

What has Spencer done?

I hope there will be Enquiries, sometime or other, into the Conduct of our Armies from Long Island to this Moment.

I hope We shall e'er long renounce some of our Monarchichal Corruptions, and become Republicans in Principle, in Sentiment, in feeling and the men appraised that they may be paid for if lost, this we think is

in Practice—and among other Republican Institutions I hope We shall annually elect all our General officers. This would purge the Stream of Some Impurities—at least I hope so.

In Republican Governments the Majesty is all in the Laws. They only are to be adored. They must be obeyed.

But at present We are not sensible of this. Citizens must be made to feel the force of evil Laws, and soldiers those of military ones.

Have you many Symptoms of Austere Republicanism in your Army? Is Virtue, or Rank? is Glory or Pay, your object.

Pray write me often, and let me know every Thing.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Tudor's February 12 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> "Philanthrop" was the pseudonym used by Jonathan Sewall (1728–96) when he wrote a series of articles in Boston newspapers in the 1760s defending Gov. Francis Bernard. John Adams wrote many responses using several pseudonyms. Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 1:58–59; Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*, 12:306–24.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feb'y. 25th. [1777]

This day there was a very interesting debate on some amendments proposed to a report of a Committee, appointed to consider of some means for preventing desertion; but the main question was concerning the jurisdiction of Congress & the States. The decision was postponed. The debate lay chiefly between Mr. Wilson, of Pennsylvania, and the Delegate from North Carolina. The opinion of a great majority was with the latter; but it was not deemed prudent to decide.<sup>1</sup> N.B. This is all that I can now transmit: but as you know the opinion of your Delegate on such questions, you can judge the opinion of Congress: & for this reason it is that I mention that a majority was in his favour.

Tr (Nc–Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> The committee "to consider the most effectual means of discouraging and preventing desertions from the army" had been appointed on February 12 and had submitted its report to Congress the following day. Congress adopted a resolution on the issue on February 25. See *JCC*, 7:108, 115–18, 154–55. For a much fuller account of the debate on this subject, see the following entry.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feby 25th 1777

The Question of Interest was again debated and postponed.<sup>1</sup> A Report was taken up relative to Deserters. It stood Originally a recommendation



of Congress to the several states to Enact Laws Empowering all Constables, Ferry keepers and Freeholders to take up persons suspected of being Deserters and Carry them before any Justice of the Peace. An Amendment was moved the purport of which was that the Power should go Immediately from Congress without the Intervention of the States. Many Gentlemen were inattentive and it passed. The Delegate from North Carolina desired to be informed if he might enter his Protest against it. He was informed by the Chair that he could not, he then desired to have his dissent entered on the Journal declaring he was not Apprehensive of any Injury from it in the State he represented because he knew it would never be there observed, the People too well knowing the Maxims of their Government, but that as it was as much as his Life was worth to Consent to the Congress exercising such a Power, he desired that he might be able to prove from the Journals that he did not. He said it appeared to him that Congress was herein assuming a Power to give authority from themselves to persons within the States to seize and Imprison the persons of the Citizens, and thereby to endanger the personal Liberty of every man in America. A motion was now made for reconsidering. On the reconsideration the Debate lay chiefly between Mr Wilson of Pennsylvania, and the North Carolina Delegate. Mr. Wilson argued that every object of Continental Concern was the subject of Continental Councils. That all Provisions made by the Continental Councils must be carried into execution by Continental authority. That the Army was certainly a Continental object, and preventing Desertion in it was certainly as necessary an object as the raising of it. That nothing could be more necessary to prevent Desertion than to take Effectual Measures for apprehending deserters, that this Power must necessarily be in the Congress, and that they certainly had Power to authorise any persons in the States to put them in Execution. That the Power of taking up deserters was in every Soldier and officer of the army, and that the Congress might make any Justice of Peace in any state such an officer and thereby give him that Power, and if by making him an officer they Could give him that Power, they surely could without. That the officers and soldiers of the army were certainly not subject to Laws of the states. That this was no more than what was every day done in appointing Commissioners to purchase provisions and other things under the resolves of Congress. That the Congress had always directed their resolves to be put in Execution by Committees of Inspection and it was never denied that they had Power.

The Delegate of North Carolina answered that he admitted Continental objects were subjects of Continental Councils—but denied that the provisions made by Continental Councils were to be enforced by Continental authority. That it would be giving Congress a Power to prostrate all the Laws and Constitutions of the states because they might create a Power within each that must act entirely Independent of them, and might act directly Contrary to them. That they might by virtue of this

Power render Ineffectual all the Barriers Provided in the states for the Security of the Rights of the Citizens for if they gave a Power to act Coercively it must be against the Subject of some State, and the subject of every state was entitled to the Protection of that particular state, and subject to the Laws of that alone, because to them alone did he give his Consent. That he hoped the Gentleman would not Insist on this Principle which in its nature was so very Extensive and alarming. That the states alone had Power to act Coercively against their Citizens, and therefore were the only Power Competent to carry into execution any Provisions whether Continental or Municipal. That he was well satisfied no Power on Earth would ever obtain Authority to act Coercively against any of the Citizens of the state he represented except under their own Legislature; unless it was obtained by Violence. That his fellow Citizens were struggling against unlawful exertions of Power, and they would submit to them from no Authority. That he admitted the army to be a proper object to be governed and directed by Continental Councils, and that it is proper the Congress should provide for punishing Desertion, and that Desertion was a very [great] evil, but that who is a deserter or who is not is a Question that must be determined previous to any Punishment, and who ever can determine it has a Power over the Life and Liberty of the Citizens for as much as any man may be accused of Desertion but every one accused may not be Guilty. That if the Congress has the Power to appoint any Person to decide this Question the Congress has power unlimited over the Lives and Liberties of all men in America and the Provisions so anxiously made by the respective States to Secure them, at Once Vanish before this Tremendous Authority. However proper it might be for Congress to punish Desertion it was Necessary for the states to prevent arbitrary and unjust punishments and Imprisonments of their Citizens, and unless some mode were provided for trying the above Question every man was liable to be imprisoned at the Discretion of Officers and servants of the Congress. No power could be Competent to this but such as is created by the Legislature of each state, and if any Question related to the internal Polity of a state it certainly was this which Involved all the Rights of the Citizens personal Freedom. He would not speak for other states, but for his own he would declare that the Constitution had anxiously provided that no man should be Imprisoned or in any Degree Injured in his Person or Property but under the authority of the Laws of the state. It was a fundamental Maxim well understood there that no Magisterial Authority could be given but by the Legislature, and none could be exercised beyond what was expressly laid down in the Laws. The Congress certainly could not give a Power within any State to hear and Determine offences or to seize and Imprison the Persons of the Citizens. Yet most assuredly the Power Contended for was no less, unless every Deserter was branded in the Face so that it could be determined without [doubt] who was Deserter and who was not. He was sorry to

hear the Gentleman Say that the Officers and Soldiers of the Army were not Subject to the Laws of the States, and hoped the Gentleman would retract it, for assuredly the army must always be in some State and might be in every State, and if they were not Subject to the Laws of the respective States, it would follow that a powerful Body of men within any State might violate with Impunity all the Rights of the Citizens and Subject them to the worst of Oppressions. This being Contrary to all the purposes for which men enter into Society, the admission of it must dissolve all Society and Government, and being peculiarly detested by the Americans who were struggling at the risque of Life and property against Oppression, it never could take place among them, until they lost al[1] Common Sense, and all Love of Freedom. That the Power of taking up deserters if it was in every officer and soldier it did not follow that every officer and soldier might call whom he pleased a deserter and Imprison and punish him as such, that there must be a Power to determine whether deserters or not, and the Congress could give no such Power without giving authority to some Individuals within the states to exercise Magisterial Discretion and subject the Citizens to that discretion. He could not conceive a State Independant if any Power could do this except their Internal Legislature who had their authority for that purpose from the People. He would declare firmly it could not be done in North Carolina by any other, if their Bill of Rights and Constitution were of any Effect, and not meer waste paper, for they provided that no freeman within the state should be in any way or Degree restrained of his Liberty or damaged in his Property except under the Laws of the state to which his Consent must be given, because every freeman had a Voice [in his?] Legislature.

That in North Carolina no Military Officer could act in any civil department whatever, and he believed they could not in any state where Government was Established, yet if it were otherwise his civil authority must be derived from the state and not the Congress, and the rules and Limits whereby it was to be exercised must be expressly laid down by the state and could not be altered or extended by the Congress unless they had a Power over the Internal Laws of the states which Power never would be given, and no one pretended to. That the Difference was manifest between giving Commissions to purchase within the states, and giving Magisterial authority. That One was only empowering some Individuals to exchange Money for Commodities in fair Contract which each party must previously agree to, here was not the shadow of restraint, but was founded on the most liberal Idea of Consent. No Contract being valid unless all the Transactions are bonafide Consented to by all the Contractors, and it was every day done by Individuals of the states the most remote, and unconnected with each other, that the other was enabling Individuals to hear and determine accusations against other Individuals, to pass Judgment, and to Subject them to punishment, which surely was the



highest act of Dominion, and could be Justified only by the Laws of the State which had the Consent and authority of the People (here he Illustr[at]ed by quoting the case of the Negro Somerset). That it was true the Congress directed their resolves to the Committees of Inspection to be put in Execution, but surely it must be remembered that the Congress recommended to the states to appoint such for that purpose and the states did appoint them accordingly. Their authority was certainly derived from that appointment, and not from the Congress in North Carolina, the matter was beyond dispute for the resolves which Constituted Committees expressly empowered them to execute the resolves of the Continental Congress.

Mr. Wilson in reply admitted that he laid down the Principle too largely, and that when he said the officers and soldiers were not subject to the Laws of the States he meant only that in their Military duty they were subject only to the Congress. He did not directly answer the arguments from North Carolina but argued *ab inconvieniente* that the Power was Necessary. He said if the States alone were competent to this Power it would follow that no deserter could be punished or apprehended but in the State where he enlisted, and Consequently by keeping out of that State he was sure of Impurity. That this was in Effect declaring that desertion could not be punished and consequently that the army might be immediately disbanded. That he did not Contend for giving the Power to Justices of the Peace &c. as such but as Individuals proper to execute the resolution. He moved to amend by taking out the words suspected of being, which would leave it deserters which he hoped would remove all objections.

Mr R.H. Lee<sup>2</sup> from Virginia said it was a Misfortune to be too learned, that he could see no more in it than he saw every day in the Newspaper which was advertising and offering a Reward for Deserters and this was certainly exercising no Magisterial Power.

Mr J Adams from Massachusetts confessed the motion passed him without his attention, that he was inclined to think from what passed that the articles of War must be enacted into Laws in the several States, and he believed the officers thought so or they would proceed with greater vigor.

The Delegate from North Carolina rejoined to all three. To Mr Wilson. That Necessity was never to be admitted as an argument for assuming a Dangerous and improper Power tho it might be admitted as an Excuse for some particular unlawful exercise of authority and then the Necessity might appear striking and Inevitable to the Power which Judges and Excuses the act. That otherwise the Plea of Necessity would Subvert all restraints laid on persons instrusted with [power and] authority, and always had been used by Tyrants for [that] Purpose. Instance Ship money, dispensations, and the present oppressive Proceeding of Britain. But even that Plea had no foundation here. The States were Competent to enact



Laws for the apprehending deserters, and there surely was no reason to doubt but that they would on a recommendation for that purpose. That the Inconvenience the Gentleman mentioned was Imaginary. It would not follow that desertion could not be prevented or punished altho it should be admitted that the states alone were Competent to give the Power of arresting suspected persons, and trying the Question deserter or not. Nor could it be concluded from this that deserters could be apprehended nowhere but in the states where they enlisted. That desertion was a Crime and like all other Crimes to be punished wherever it should be Committed, and by the Power who had Competent Jurisdiction. That the Crime Once Committed the offender might be apprehended in any state and removed to the Jurisdiction who had power to punish, but every Individual who might be Apprehended had a right to call for the Interposition of the state where he was Apprehended to Enquire whether he was a person liable to suspicion and whether the restraint of his Liberty was lawful or not, but the Power to Interpose in this manner could only be derived from the Internal Legislature [so?] the Power to arrest must be derived from the same source, or it would follow that the Citizens of each state might be restrained of their Liberty by an Authority not derived from themselves which could not subsist with freedom and Independance. Tis plain from these Considerations that desertion was no more secure of Impunity than Murder, for in both the offender must be arrested by Virtue of an authority derived from the state where found, and each must be tried by the Competent Jurisdiction and punished according to the Laws of the Community against which he offended. The amendment would [not] remove [the] objection because whether the word suspected was in or not [the objec]tion must remain the same. No one could be more than [suspected] before conviction, and the Question of Guilt or Innocence must be determined somewhere previous to punishment.

The Distinction between Magistrates as Magistrates, and as persons proper to execute resolves was incomprehensible. If any thing render them more proper than freeholders it was what distinguished them from Freeholders which certainly was being Magistrates, and what but their authority as Magistrates rendered them fitter for Executing the resolve? Twas surely their Power that was considered as rendering them more fit, and whence could they derive their Power but from their Quality as Magistrates? In fact it was an attempt to Convey authority from the Congress to the Magistrates of the states, which would Involve the Personal rights of every Citizen and which could be derived from no Power but the People of the respective states.

To Mr. Lee. The Difference is certainly very perceptible between offering reward to any Individual who shall apprehend Deserters and Subject them to the proper tribunals for deciding Concerning Guilt or

Innocence (for the advertisements could have no other Effect) and Impowering persons in the States to decide this Question, and to Imprison and remove out of the State in Consequence of such decision. The One was no more than Inviting people to run the hazard of an action for being mistaken, and to be dilligent in looking out for deserters by hopes of the reward, but the other was giving Power to Exercise discretion in deciding Guilt or Innocence, and Consequently of freedom and Imprisonment, and Eventually Life and Death. That in the latter case no remedy could be had for the Injury, if the Congress could give the Power because the Magistrate must decide Judicially, and must be subject to no punishment for being Mistaken because every Judge undertook to use his best endeavors to discover Truth, but did not promise to be Infallible but the states would undoubtedly punish the Magistrate for acting without Jurisdiction, which would prove they did not admit the Power of Congress.

To Mr. Adams. The Congress was Impowered by the several States to levy an Army, and to conduct the War and the Government of the Army was Incident to that Power. The army could not be governed without rules and such rules were the articles of War which the Congress undoubtedly had a right to make, and every Soldier was particularly bound to submit to them, because he Consents to be governed by them, and tried and punished by them not by representatives merely but by actual person Consent, for they are read to him at the time of Inlistment. But the Power of Congress could not extend to subject any other but such as enlisted and personally consented to the articles War, and it was the Duty of the states to Interpose whenever the Question arose whether Soldier or not, because otherwise their Citizens might be subjected to Martial Law against their Consent—and whenever any soldier apprehended the Courts martial exceeded their Jurisdiction he had a right to bring the matter before the Civil Tribunal of the state where he was because other wise the Military might become absolute and Independant of the Civil Authority.

During this Debate Mr. Wilson Instanced a Case where the Congress had Committed a man by their own Authority, and no objection made.

The Delegate from N.C. declared he was sorry to hear it, but would excuse it because he would suppose some special Circumstances of Necessity. He declared had he been present it should not have passed without Opposition and he hoped it never would be repeated for since no Power could call the Congress to account if they could Imprison, they might do the greatest wrong without any remedy, and the Liberty of America would be at the mercy of a Majority in Congress which might not Exceed five members because nine states make a Congress, and there are more than five represented by a single member.

The Question for adjournment to Philadelphia was carried in the negative.<sup>3</sup>

MS (NN). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See Burke's Notes of Debates, February 26, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Lee was a member of the committee on deserters whose report was at issue. *JCC*, 7:108.

<sup>3</sup> Congress decided to remain in Baltimore for the time being, after receiving letters from the Executive Committee and from Washington reporting the arrival of heavy British reinforcements in New Jersey. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:168-69; and Executive Committee to John Hancock, February 22, 1777.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir Philada. Feby 25th. 1777

We have not received any advices from the General since the letter we wrote you on Saturday Morning, but an officer brought from Head Quarters the several dispatches enclosed herewith. He left that on Friday & that morning there had been an engagement or skirmish between a Foraging Party of the Enemy, of about 700 Strong & a smaller Number of ours who came off Victorious, took some prisoners & 20 Waggons loaded with Forage after driving them into their lines. Our People also met with some loss, the particulars are not yet ascertained.

The officer that gives this Account is a Lieutt & Adjutant Proctor who says that on the Road he fell in with an officer that had just come from New York where he was a Prisoner & amongst other things told him Genl Lee was to be sent to England & that the Ship was lying in readiness to depart, that Genl Robertson is to attend him on the Voyage, if this be true it may serve as a Clue to Genl. Lee's urgency to see some Members of Congress, concerning which we hourly expect to hear from You.

This same officer reports that he understood Genl Howe was determined to renew his attack on this City and had drawn down the Troops from Rhode Island for that purpose & they give out in New York that they are now 19,000 Strong including the Troops at Rhode Island, New York & the Jerseys, but this we cannot believe. You will please to receive herewith, the application of Baron Arndt a Prussian officer who appears to be a Genteel Soldier like Man, he like all the other Foreigners will no doubt be very impatient for an appointment. He has brought his Lady with him and will find it expensive living if not soon taken into pay.<sup>1</sup>

The Express from Genl. Schuyler that brought dispatches which were sent to Congress three weeks ago & one that came from Boston from

Messrs. Livingston & Turnbull are still waiting here the returns from Congress & grow very impatient.

We have the honor to remain sir, Your obedt hble servt,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

Geo Walton

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris, Clymer, and Walton.

<sup>1</sup> On March 19 Congress resolved that "the baron de Arendt be appointed to the command of the German battalion in the room of Colonel Hausegger." *JCC*, 7:185.

## Elbridge Gerry to Thomas Gerry

Dr Brother

Baltimore Feby 25th 1777

I have just recd your Favour of Jany 6th, in Answer to a part of wch. give me Leave to refer You to my Letter of the 21st Inst. With respect to my proposal for manning, as well as arming the Vessel that is to bring the Stores, by referring to the Letter I believe it will appear that You have misapprehended it. The premium required by the Under Writers at Salem is too high, & as the other two Setts of Bills Lading will not be wanted at present, You may wait for Oppertunity of safe Conveyance. When Mr. Abbot returns from his Cruise I presume he will pay the Ballances mentioned, but if he should defer it, be kind enough to signify to him my Request relative thereto; also to inclose Mr Harris' Sales of the salt &c. I am sorry to hear from a Marblehead Whig, that the Tories are suffered to take the Lead; surely Skill is not wanted to regulate these unworthy people, & oblige them to promote the Cause from wch they wickedly have swerved. The noble Steed (some of whose ordinary Qualities they seem to partake), becomes a most useful Animal when properly disciplined; & neglected or enlarged soon contracts a Disposition troublesome, & refracting, however I think it will not be long before they'll receive their Quietus in America. By Letters from Mr Dean in France, the powers of Europe were expecting a formal Annunciation of our Independance at their respective Courts.<sup>1</sup> He thinks a general War in Europe inevitable; & to confirm the Intention of France, our Agent in the West Indies informs us that he saw a Letter from his most christian Majesty desiring the Commanding Officer at St Domingo (Who having been a considerable Time on that Station had requested Leave to return) in the most pressing Term to remain there till further orders as he would be immediately wanted to take the Command of a considerable Army in that Quarter.<sup>2</sup> This the officer has chearfully accepted. I have communicated to Messrs Samuel & Robert Purviance, the



part of your Letter that relates to them; & the Delegates of the Massachusetts B. having some Interest in their Hands belonging to the State, will probably have no Objection to the taking Mr Purviances Draught on You for such a part as he may want to fulfil your order, & endorsing the same to the assembly. The Raisens are principally sold as these Gentlemen inform me from 50/ to 60/ Currency; but great Destruction is made in many of the Casks by Neglect & Vermin.

In Addition to the 88 Batalions wch You mention, 28 of Infantry, 4 of the Train & 3 or 4 of Cavalry are now recruiting; I hope no Means to raise, arm, & cloath them will be unessayed & when this is accomplished I think We shall under providence have agreeable prospects of Success.

I inclose You a Copy of Mr Haydens Note & order thereon; the original If sent might miscarry & be attended with Inconveniences. The Capture of the two prizes wch. you mention, was the Fortune of war & the recapture of them is only the Reverse, or as the Frenchman says, the same Thing; "Fort' de Ger [Guerre?]."

The Enemy are again collecting their Force at Brunswick probably with a View to pursue their former Design; Congress have however, Intentions to reutrn to that City, & as it will give a good Appearance to our affairs at Home & abroad, I hope they will pursue this plan. I remain as before, yours with sincere Esteem,

E Gerry

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup>Undoubtedly a reference to Silas Deane's October 8 and 25, 1776, letters to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which were read in Congress on February 24. See *JCC*, 7:148; and Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:167-69, 183-84. For other recently received Deane correspondence, see Robert Morris to Silas Deane, December 20, 1776, note 2.

<sup>2</sup>This information is in William Bingham's January 15 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which was also read in Congress on February 24. *JCC*, 7:148.

## John Hancock to William Livingston

Sir, Baltimore Feby 25th. 1777

The Congress being informed by Express from Genl. Washington that the Enemy at Brunswick were considerably reinforced by the Troops under Genl. Clinton, came to a Resolution which I am commanded to convey to you, and agreeably to the Terms of it, to request that you will immediately order the Militia of your State properly armed and equipped to join the General with the utmost Expedition, it being the earnest Desire of Congress, to make the Army under his immediate Command sufficiently strong, not only to confine the Enemy within their present Quarters, and prevent them from drawing Supplies of any Kind from the

Country, but by the Blessing of God, totally to subdue them before they can be further reinforced.<sup>1</sup> I have the Honour to be, with Respect, Sir, your most obed. Servt.  
John Hancock Presidt.

RC (MHi). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:150; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 24, 1777. This day Hancock sent virtually the same letter to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety. PCC, item 12A; and *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:244.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council

Gentlemen, Baltimore Feby 25th 1777.

Understanding that Mr. John Wilcocks a Gentleman of the City of Philada. has lately had a Vessel seized & carried into Boston Harbour, and that the Legality of the Capture now remains to be tried, in Justice to Mr. Wilcocks I beg Leave to inform you, that he is a Gentleman of the fairest Character; and a firm Friend to the American Cause, and that when the Militia of Pennsylvania were called out, he commanded a Company on that Occasion. The warm Recommendation I have received of Captain Wilcocks from Mr. Morris, and my own Knowledge of him, induce me to request you will take a proper Notice of him, being well convinced, that your Attention cannot fail to place him in the fairest Light as a Gentleman of unsuspected Principles, and will of Course give him that Advantage which a Man engaged in a legal Controversy must always derive from possessing the Character of Honour and Integrity.

I am, with great Respect, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Sert.

John Hancock

RC (M-Ar). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

## John Hancock to the New York Convention

Gentlemen, Baltimore Feby. 25th. 1777.

In Consequence of Intelligence from Genl. Washington received yesterday by Express, that the Enemy at Brunswick were considerably reinforced by the Junction of the Troops from Rhode Island under the Command of General Clinton, the Congress immediately came to a Resolution that it would be highly agreeable to them, that Genl. Washington should call to his assistance, such of the Troops under Genl. Heath, as he might think necessary; and I have this Day wrote to him to inform him of this Determination.<sup>1</sup> But as the Absence of the regular Troops, may leave the Passes in the Highlands unguarded, I am directed by Congress, to request, that you will station as many of the Militia at those Passes, as will be suffi-

cient to defend them agt. the Attempts of the Enemy—it being the earnest Desire of Congress to make the Army under the immediate Command of Genl. Washington sufficiently strong, not only to confine the Enemy within their present Quarters, and to prevent them from drawing Support of any Kind from the Country, but, by the Blessing of God, to subdue them before they can be farther reinforced.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Servt. J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:149; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 24, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:149.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir, Baltimore Feby 25th. 1777

From the Resolves, which I have the Honour of transmitting herewith, you will perceive the Measures Congress have taken to reinforce your Army at this Juncture.<sup>1</sup>

I have wrote to the Convention of New York to place a proper Guard of Militia at the Passes in the Highlands, in Case you should think proper to call to your Assistance the Troops under Genl. Heath, which will be highly agreeable to Congress.

I have likewise wrote to the Governor of New Jersey, and to the Council of Safety of Pennsylvania, to call forth their Militia at this important Crisis. It is indeed devoutly to be wished, and is the earnest Desire of Congress, that the Army under your Command may be made not only strong enough to confine the Enemy within their present Quarters and prevent them from getting Supplies from the Country, but totally to subdue them before they can be further reinforced. You will therefore be pleased to write to the Colonels or other Commanding officers of the Regiments that are raising in the New England States, as well as those of New York and New Jersey, and order them immediately to march the Troops under their Command in the most expeditious Manner to Head Quarters. Similar Letters will be written by the Board of War to the Commanding Officers in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia. I beg Leave to refer your Attention to the whole of the enclosed Resolves.

Your Favour of the 20th inst came to Hand the 24th and was immediately laid before Congress. I have the Honour to be, with Sentiments of the greatest Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presid.

[P.S.] In consequence of your Letter & one from Mr Morris, Congress have suspended their Remove to Philada. for a few days.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:149–50; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 24, 1777. Hancock also sent Washington resolves of February 24 and 25 about deserters, Regnier de Roussi, profanity, and collecting arms. *JCC*, 7:149, 154–57.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Feby 26th [1777]

The Question came on again relative to Interest on Loan Certificates and<sup>1</sup> it was determined to give the Six per cent, Connecticut assenting and giving a Majority, because it drew Georgia with it.<sup>2</sup> There was an attempt to extend the Interest to the Certificates which should be given in payment of Lottery prizes, but it was rejected. The debates were long and troublesome, but unimportant. North Carolina was always against the Increase of Interest because the delegate Considered it<sup>3</sup> a resolution to carry on the war at 6 per cent Interest rather than four, and that any sum of money which might be Accumulated in the great cities even if they could be borrowed at six per cent yet the advantage arising from that acquisi[tion] by no means Compensated for the increased interest at which the War must be carried on.

The question was put in the morning for an adjournment to Philada. All the Southern Delegates were against it except Georgia who always votes with Connecticut. The reasons were given that so much business of Consequence was before the Congress it was improper to suspend that Business by an adjournment at so busy a Season, that the weather was so bad, and several states so Circumstanced there was very little probability of the Congress meeting at Philadelphia in several weeks, that the General was of Opinion that the Enemy Intended an attack on Philadelphia and if they attempted it he had no force to stop them. In fine that it would be foregoing a certainty of doing Business for a very great uncertainty. For it, the only reason of any weight came from the Board of War which was that for want of Mechanics and Waggons the Business of their department went on very heavily at Baltimore. This was answered by observing that an adjournment would cause an entire suspension of that and all business, and there was no probability of an early meeting at Philadelphia. There was a peevish altercation on the Matter, and the delegate from North Carolina moved<sup>4</sup> to put off the Question on behalf of the Colony. A fierce debate ensued. J. Adams, Doctr Witherspoon, Mr Wilson, Mr Sherman and some others alledged that it must be deferred to a Majority whether the rule could apply to this case, and in short whether the Colony<sup>5</sup> should be permitted to exercise the right of postponing the Question. R.H. Lee with great perspicuity and force of Argument urged the violent Impropriety of putting such a Question at a time when a State attempted to avail itself of a Privilege reserved to each by the Original<sup>6</sup> Rules of the



Congress which Certainly formed its Constitution<sup>7</sup> and that if the rule was thought inconvenient the proper way would be to let the state first avail itself thereof and afterwards Consider the rule and alter and amend it if thought Necessary. F.L. Lee observed that the rule was originally intended to prevent a Majority from deciding on any matter with too much precipitation and if it was to be submitted to a Majority when it was proper to apply the rule, or when a State might avail itself of it, the Majority would always determine against applying it at all. Mr Haywood from S. Carolina urged that he thought it a very extraordinary kind of proposition to submit to a Majority whether that Majority should be checked by a Power absolutely reserved for that purpose in the Constitution of the Congress. The Delegate from North Carolina declared that he would enter into no Debate on the subject whether he should avail himself of a right which was reserved to every state in the Original Constitution of the Congress: that those rules must have been entered into by Common Consent, and nothing but Common Consent<sup>8</sup> could dispense with them, that if a Majority of Congress could vote away the rules of the Congress which Common Consent had Established they were a Body bound by no rule at all and only Governed by arbitrary discretion, that if this was the case no state was secure, a Majority might vote that two, three, four or five states should form a Congress, altho the present rule required nine, that the votes should not be by states but by voice Individually. In short any the smallest Number of the Delegates might take upon them the whole Authority of the Congress, that putting the right of the state to the Question was assuming to exercise an arbitrary tyrannical discretion and if it was done he should Consider it as a most violent invasion of the right of his State which he would endeavor to resent as became him, that if the Question was at all put he should be at no loss how to Conduct himself. That he would always to the best of his Judgment make a prudent use of any privilege with which he was Invested, but he hoped he should always have firmness enough to do it maintaining the smallest Privilege of the state he represented. That gentlemen were exceedingly Mistaken if they deemed him a Man who would tamely suffer any<sup>9</sup> Invasion or encroachment on its Rights. That if that Assembly proceeded to so arbitrary and Tyrannical an exertion of Power he would Consider it as no longer that which ought to be trusted with the Liberties of their Fellow Citizens, and he would shape his Conduct accordingly. The Delegates of New Hampshire, Maryland, Virginia and South Carolina Joined in this very strenuously insisting that it was a most violent and arbitrary Act of Power to put any Question at all on this matter—and the others (some Individuals among them being of Opinion also with N.C.) perceiving the determined resolution of N.C. to withdraw from Congress if any such Question should be put, they waived their Opposition, and he exercised his right.<sup>10</sup>

MS (NN). Tr (Nc-Ar). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Foregoing omitted in Tr.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:158.

<sup>3</sup> In the Tr the remainder of this sentence reads: "as incapable of producing any money, but in the way of an emission on interest, and therefore that it was resolving to carry on the war at an interest unnecessarily increased one half, and that no sum was accumulated or could be borrowed, the acquisition of which would compensate for carrying on the war at this increased interest."

<sup>4</sup> "Moved, in the right of the State," in Tr.

<sup>5</sup> "State" in Tr.

<sup>6</sup> "Fundamental" in Tr.

<sup>7</sup> In the Tr the remainder of this sentence reads: "That no change should be attempted until the State had exercised its right, and the rule might afterwards be considered and amended if thought requisite."

<sup>8</sup> "Sense" in Tr.

<sup>9</sup> "The smallest" in Tr.

<sup>10</sup> The Tr ends with this additional sentence: "The next day the adjournment was carried." See also *JCC*, 7:164; and Burke's Notes of Debates, February 27, 1777.

## William Ellery to William Vernon

Dear Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 26th. 1777

I received your Letter of the 19th of January, and am sorry that you and other Friends of their Country should be compelled to quit their Habitations; but it is the Fortune of War. I wish that you had timely retreated and carried your Effects along with you. However, if I recollect rightly, you had sent off Part of your Furniture to a Place of Safety before I left Newport. I wonder that you should hesitate about my Approbation of your Flight. It would have been worse than Death to you to have been exposed to the Insolence of the Tories. They would have triumphed more at your Captivity than Sawney and his Auditors did when they bid the Gates of Trinity lift up their Heads that they might enter in and devoutly curse the Friends to the Rights of Mankind.

The Time is fast approaching when the proud Hierarchy will sink like a Milstone never to rise any more; when the Sons of Freedom will triumph over the Minions of arbitrary Power. What tho' We should sacrifice our Peace and Interest for a Time, the Cause is worth our Lives. We leave to our Children, to Posterity the most inestimable of all Blessings. This Consideration supports and will I hope support me under all the Calamities I may be called to encounter in the glorious Struggle in which we are engaged.

I inquired of Dr Witherspoon, after your Son, when the good Doctor was obliged to quit the Jersey; but could get no Information concerning him. Indeed I never heard of him until I received your Letter. I lament

with you that he hath been drove from his Studies; for he is an agreeable promising Youth and bids fair to be serviceable to Mankind. I left Philadelphia the 13th of Decr. When I shall return is uncertain but I believe it will be soon; for Congress have the Matter of a Removal thither in Contemplation. When I go there I will see him if he should be there, and give him my best Advice, and hope you will do my Children the same Kindness. Philadelphia is so near the Scene of War, that I am suspicious it will not be favorable to his Studies; for the Muses fly from the Din of Arms. However History may be read and French may be learned without that close and uninterrupted Attention which the severer Studies of Mathematicks and Philosophy demand.

It grieves me to hear that the Continental Seamen have not been paid their Wages and Prize Money. Repeated Orders have been given to the Agent to have it done. The Congress are fully sensible of the Importance of having a respectable Navy, and have endeavoured to form and equip One; but through Ignorance and Neglect they have not been able to accomplish their Purpose yet. I hope however to see One afloat before long. A proper Board of Admiralty is very much wanted. The Members of Congress are unacquainted with this Department. As One of the Marine Committee I sensibly feel my Ignorance in this Respect. Under a mortifying Sense of this I wrote to you for Information in this Matter. Books cannot be had here; and I should have been glad to have been pointed to proper Authors on this Subject when I should be in a Place where Books may be had. Let me know whether it would suit you to be a Member of a Marine Board. I suppose Congress will institute One with a suitable competent Salary, there Residence to be I presume at Philadelphia. I should be exceedingly glad to be serviceable to you or any of the Friends to Liberty.

Since I wrote the foregoing I have seen and conversed with Dr. Witherspoon about your Son.<sup>1</sup> He tells me that he left your Son, the 20th of January at Prince-Town, that he hath the Use of his Books, that at that Place, he can better learn French, pursue other Studies, preserve his Morals and Health, than at Philadelphia. I am intirely of his Opinion. It is true that he may be again driven from Prince-Town; but he is without any Incumbrance, may easily take his cloaths, and push off on the Approach of the Enemy. He might too be drove from Philadelphia if he should reside there. So that upon the whole I think, with the learned Dr that Prince-Town is the most eligible Place. We have nothing new. The Enemy we hear are reinforced and it is thought that by their having dragged some heavy Cannon to Brunswick, and some other Circumstances that they mean to make a Movement; but what their Object will be is uncertain. Congress are taking Measures to reinforce Genl. Washington, until the regular Army shall be muster'd. Inlistments go on as fast as could be expected; and I hope that we shall early

in the Spring have a very respectable Army in the Field, and<sup>2</sup> [an] Army sufficient to vanquish our Foes.<sup>3</sup>

Reprinted from *Publications of the Rhode Island Historical Society* 8 (January 1901), pp. 201-3; and RC (RNHi). From the content of this letter it is clear that Ellery did not complete it the day it was begun. The printed text ends abruptly, but because none of the MS from which it was taken has been found, it is not possible to compare it physically with the fragment of the RC that has been located and that is chiefly a continuation of a letter obviously begun much earlier. As the sense of the broken sentence with which the printed text ends is completed by the sentence fragment at the top of the RC, it appears that the two fragments belong together and constitute the full letter that Ellery began on February 26.

<sup>1</sup> Ellery obviously added this paragraph sometime after he had completed the preceding portion, but it contains no evidence to establish just when he wrote it. For an indication that he did not finally complete the letter until about March 15, see the continuation designated below.

<sup>2</sup> Remainder of letter taken from RC.

<sup>3</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Ellery to Vernon, March 15, 1777.

## Executive Committee to John Hancock

Sir

Philada. Feby 26th. 1777

The Sundry dispatches sent herewith arrived this morning and as General Washington is so very Urgent respecting the removal of all the Public Stores we shall urge the execution of the orders issued by us for that purpose last Week, altho we Still think there are insuperable obstackles to General Howe getting into this City but whilst our General is so strongly of opinion that an attack on this place is Meditated, it wou'd not be right for Congress to come here.<sup>1</sup> This is an unfortunate situation. Congress shou'd be here to superintend abundance of business & yet circumstances turn up at the instant they were coming, that make it imprudent. Your distance from us is too great & much Public business is retarded by it. The Expresses are frequently stopped at Susquehannah, Public officers totally at a loss for instructions in many departments and every department in constant want of money. We are amazed that Congress shou'd so peremptorily refuse to raise the Interest of money when it is so very evident to every body out of doors that it is the only measure left to supply them with money, now is the time to do it for shou'd you wait untill some fresh disaster to our Troops or some important Success of the Enemy raises again the hopes of Tories & fears of Whiggs, then comes your offer at six per Cent without producing any other effect than to make your Credit still worse than it is already and in the end you will be obliged to give ten instead of six per Cent for money to carry on the war. We cannot help mentioning this important matter very frequently as we conceive Congress are not so fully informed of their own Necessities as we are. We conceive we do our duty in telling them of it and if



future Ill Consequences arise by this plan not being adopted, the error does not lye at our door. We think as the Congress has passed a Vote to remove from Baltimore they wou'd be better situated at Lancaster than where they are, as it is but one days journey from hēnce & no interrupted Ferry between, this move & raising the interest wou'd be very eligible measures at present and we have Stopped the Waggons from going down until your pleasure is signified.

Please to deliver the letter herein directed to Mr Morris, to the Committee of Secret Correspondance. We have the honor to remain with the utmost respect, sir, Your Obedt Servants,

Robt Morris

Geo Clymer

RC (DNA: PCC, item 137). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:184–85.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada Feby 26th 1777

We have this Night received from Congress the dispatches sent herewith. By these you will see the promotions that have taken place and that no deputation of Members of Congress are to meet Genl Lee, who I suppose will be much disappointed but surely he shou'd have pointed out more clearly the design of his request, as the consequences of compliance or even of the refusal may be important.<sup>1</sup> It wou'd appear from what we have lately heard that Genl. Howe intends sending him to England which we shall be sorry for, as such a measure may possibly involve in its consequences more destruction than either side really wish for. We have recommended to Congress either to remain where they are, or if they do remove to let it be to Lancaster which we think wou'd be much more convenient than Baltimore. The Public business meets great obstructions from their distance and the difficulties of getting dispatches backwards & forwards, they are exceedingly retarded by bad roads & the frequent stoppage at Susquehannah Ferry & in our oppinion when they did move they shou'd have gone to Lancaster, if they remove again before Genl. Howes designs are clearly evinced or frustrated, it shou'd be there. We Issued orders last Week to have all the Public Stores in readiness to remove from this place and are now urging to every department the propriety of carrying those orders into execution not only so far as relates to their being in readiness but as to the actual removing of them which we shall insist on in compliance with your repeated requisitions on this head. We are, Your Excellencys Most obed & hble servants,

Robt Morris

Geo. Clymer

RC (DLC). Written by Morris and signed by Morris and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> Washington deeply regretted Congress' decision not to meet with General Lee, and on March 2 he urged Morris to use his influence with Congress to reverse the decision. "I wish, with all my heart," Washington observed, "that Congress had gratified General Lee in his request. If not too late, I wish they would do it still. I can see no possible evil that can result from it; some good I think might. The request to see a Gentleman or two, came from the *General* not from the *Commissioners*; there could have been no harm, therefore, in hearing what *he* had to say on *any* subject, especially as he had declared, that his own personal Interest was deeply concerned." Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:224.

Washington's disappointment was even more fully explained in a March 2, 1777, letter to Morris from Tench Tilghman, one of the general's military secretaries. "The late determinations of Congress," Tilghman reported, "to refuse the proposed Conferences with General Lee, and to confine the Hessian Field Officers & Col. Campbell strictly because Genl. Howe will not agree to their exchange for Genl. Lee, have embarrassed his Excellency not a little, and will, in my Opinion, in their consequences, be attended with much public disadvantage. I should not have given you my Sentiments on these Subjects thus freely and confidentially, but I know I can say more to you than the General would wish to say to Congress, least they should construe a freedom of Expression into an abuse and ill use of those extensive powers with which they have lately vested him. If my Sentiments and Reasons should happily coincide with yours upon the occasion, I hope the Influence which you possess in the House, may enable you to obtain such an Alteration in the Measures alluded to, as may be of more advantage to Genl. Lee, whom they are principally intended to serve, and of more essential good to the public.

"It is true Genl. Lees letters are so mysterious that it is impossible to form any conjecture of what was to be expected from the Conference. But take it in a personal light, and surely it was hard to refuse him an Interview with two of his Friends, to whom he might have something to communicate, which in his present Situation could not possibly be conveyed by Letter. If the Conference was intended to communicate any thing of a public Nature, as some parts of Genl. Lees letter seem to hint, some useful information might have been received and no public ill could have accrued, for as these Gentlemen would have only gone to hear but not to negotiate, it would not have been in their powers, if so inclined, to have given up one Inch of the dignity of Congress, or the least particle of the Liberties of their Country. Indeed Members of Congress were not absolutely necessary and any indifferent Gentlemen might have been appointed. But Sir, I fear an evil will result from the refusal of this Conference, much greater than any I have yet mentioned. You very well know that the disaffected, in the province [of] Pennsylvania chiefly, have ever held up an Argument to the people, that had not Congress from the beginning shewn a greater disposition for War than peace, Matters had never gone to the Lengths they have. And you also may remember what an amazing Influence these doctrines had untill a deputation of Congress met Lord and Genl. Howe upon Staten Island and obliged them to confess, in a manner, that they had no powers beyond those expressed in the Act of Parliament. From that time to this, they have been pretty Silent, or at least have made impressions but upon weak Minds. Now another opportunity offers for them to assert again, that Genl. Lees letter coming thro' Genl. Howe can be construed into nothing more than an overture for an accommodation. And as the letter as I said before, is very mysterious, every man will comment upon it, as it suits his Views and principles. I shall just mention one Reason more before I conclude the Subject of the Conference. Genl. Lee's influence is very extensive in our Army, and if he should be sent home or any indignity offered to his person, his

Friends will directly say, that had his proposition been acceded to, matters might have gone otherwise, and he might have chalked out some plan whereby he might have regained his Liberty. They will also say that a Man of Genl. Lees known attachment to the Cause would never have made a proposition injurious to the dignity or Liberty of this Country, and therefore would never have demanded the Conference, had he not expected the most salutary Effects from it." James S. Copley Library.

Despite Washington's chagrin and Lee's reiteration of his request on March 19 that two or three delegates "be deputed to converse with me on subjects of great importance not only to myself but the Community I so sincerely love," Congress on March 29 reaffirmed that it was still "improper to send any of their members to confer with General Lee upon the subjects mentioned in his letter." See *JCC*, 7:207; and *NYHS Collections* 5 (1872): 360.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore Februy. 26th. 1777

In Consequence of yours by Express respecting the State of our Army, & the Reinforcement of Howe's Army at Brunswick, & yor opinion that at present it would not be prudent for Congress to Return to Philada., the Congress have determin'd to suspend their Remove for some days, at least untill we hear from you, which I hope will be soon, & that the way is clear for us to persue our own course.<sup>1</sup> We must give these fellows a trimming. If we can but subdue the present force in the Jerseys, I think the Day is ours, one noble Exertion by a large Body flying to the support of the General, with a determination to oppose Howe's Army at all Events would effect the Business, and before any Reinforcements. could Arrive from Europe we should be in such Readiness as soon to give a good Accot. of them, tho I beleive they will soon be tir'd of their Game; We have got the Trumps, let us play the Game well.

I Refer you to my Letter to the General, & the resolves of Congress therein,<sup>2</sup> I have left the Letter open for your perusal, after which please to Seal & forward to the Genl. by a special Express, as also the one to Govr Livingston & the Convention of New York, all to go by Express. Please also to Send the Letter Inclos'd to yor Council of Safety. I am almost hurried to Death, but must keep at it, however I know you will Excuse me in not Adding, as I am realy pinch'd for time. Send us good News, & let us go on to Philada. & Dispatch what Business we have on hand, that I may have Leave to Return to Boston the last week in April.

God Bless you, and beleive me, Dr. Sr, Yours Affection'y,

John Hancock

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:157.

<sup>2</sup> See Hancock to Washington, February 25, 1777.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham

Sir

Philada. Feby 26. 1777

I wrote you very lately on behalf of the Committee of Secret Correspondance<sup>1</sup> then & still at Baltimore, I then sent you a letter from them<sup>2</sup> & herewith is another. That letter I hope will be delivered you by Cap Nichs Biddle before you receive this, but the time when he may appear is very uncertain as he was out on a Cruize when those dispatches were sent in search of him. I then told you the situation of our affairs but some little alterations have since taken place.<sup>3</sup>

You will have seen by former advices that Kind Providence gave a change to the affairs of America on Christmas Night when Genl Washington begun an attempt to surprize Trenton which he effected the next morning & took Prisoners three Hessians Regiments. Soon after by a Master Stroke of Generalship He surprized, took & destroyed three other Regiments chiefly British at Prince Town. All this was done with Militia, a kind of Troops not to be depended on in a general Action in the open Field against a large, regular & well disciplined Army. Genl Washingtons experience taught him this lesson & his abilities enable him to make the proper use of such Troops as he has, therefore his aim was to change the Seat of War & draw the Enemy into a part of the Country favourable for the kind of War he knew was best for him & accordingly after the two Feats at Trenton & Prince Town he marched his small Army to Morris Town a Hilly Country in the Upper parts of the Jersey. The Enemy knowing their Stores were all lodged at Brunswick were obliged to follow him to secure that place and they were obliged to abandon all their other posts in the Jerseys for fear of having their Communications cut off, as happened at Elizabeth Town, Newark & Hackinsack where their parties & Guards were taken Prisoners. They therefore Seated themselves at Brunswick, threw up works there & at Amboy, thus the Shoars of Delaware were freed of them & the Citizens of Philadelphia relieved from their apprehensions of loosing their City this Winter. Genl Washington holds his Head Quarters at Morris Town, but has established posts all round Brunswick & altho they are superiour in Numbers, & our Army consists still chiefly of Militia, yet the Enemy are so penned in that they cannot move a Mile out of Town without being Attacked. They have lost a greater number of Horses & are much distressed for Forage to Subsist those they have left, therefore they send out Foraging parties once or twice a Week consisting of 2000 to 3000 Men. They are always attacked by some of ours and generally loose more or less Men, Waggons, Horses &c. Thus our people have continued to gall & harass them ever since they took Shelter within their lines at Brunswick & this is the Game Genl. Washington must wish to play untill our New Enlistments are compleat and the Men Embodied. In the Mean time the Enemy are grown sore & impatient under such rough usage, they are meditating some stroke



and continue publickly to threaten this City, whether they can execute their threats or not time alone can shew. Genl Howe is now at Brunswick in person and having ordered thither a large reinforcement from Rhode Island part of which are arrived, he may if he pleases move from Brunswick to Trenton provided he has Horses & Waggon sufficient left to Hall the Artillery, Stores, Forage, Provisions & baggage necessary for such an attempt which I very much doubt, and still the difficulty of Crossing Delaware occurs, beside that Genl Washington wou'd fall on his Rear and cut off his Communication with New York. Upon the whole I think the Enemys Situation is not what they wou'd wish, neither is ours what I wish it to be. Our New Enlistments go on briskly but the Men must be cloathed, Armed, embodied & in some degree disciplined before they can be formidable. Untill that is compleated our dependance is on Militia who will not be subject to severe discipline & they Consume & waste our Stores ten times more than our regular Troops. However if Genl. Howe gives us a little more time he will find himself in a bad box. The worst circumstances in our affairs at this period is the situation of Tyconderago which from the same fountain that all the disgrace America has yet suffered, is near being lost. I mean the short enlistments. It happens unfortunately that the times for which the Garrison that has held that post all winter were enlisted is expired & they have left it with only about 500 men. Therefore shou'd Mr Carleton Meditate a winter Expedition against that place as he has given out, he will probably succeed and at the same time I must tell you that very effectual measures are now taking to strengthen & support it, so that if Genl Carleton keeps off for a summer Campaigne he will be too late & make no better hand of it than he did last year. You will see by the News Papers sent herewith that the several States are getting into the exercise of Government. When that is fairly effected they will be able to suppress the Spirit of Toryisme & nothing else is wanted to make the American Arms vigorous & successful. I shall not have time to write so full an acct of our affairs to the Commissioners at Paris as is Contained herein, therefore Request you will send them a Copy of this letter and both they and you will make proper use of the Contents promulgating what ought to be publickly known & suppressing the rest, as I give you things fairly as they stand for your & their own information.<sup>4</sup>

The Enemies Ships Gall us Confoundedly, they have taken a number of Valuable Vessells from us, however in spite of all their Vigilance we have got many Valueable supplies in this winter and still hope for many more. They have several Cruizers in Chesapeak Bay that stop the Trade of Maryland & Virginia at this time, but they will be tired of it by & by. They have left us at liberty here awhile & we are making the best use we can of the opportunity. I am sir, Your obedt hble servant,

Robt Morris

P.S. We have good Accounts from Tyconderago this day & I think they indicate strongly that we have not much to fear in that quarter. Genl. Howe I believe is determined to attack this place & he may succeed but if he does it will be his ruin in the end, however a deep snow is fallen that makes vastly against his movements and the chance is still much in our favour. We hear this day of Doctr Franklins arrival in France.

Yours &c, R M

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Probably the Committee of Secret Correspondence's February 1, 1777, letter to Bingham.

<sup>3</sup> In addition to the letters mentioned here that Morris had recently sent to Bingham, he also sent him the following one dated February 25, 1777. "I hope this will be delivered You by Mr. Jno. Reed of this place a Brother of Colo Reed who has recommended him to me for the purpose of carrying dispatches to the American Commissioners at the Court of Paris, this Young Gentn has not had an opportunity of acquiring much experience in the World, it is his care & Fidelity, that entitles him to the present trust, and I have Committed to his Custody not only the letters directed to you but several for the Honorable Doctr Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esqrs. which he will put under your care during his Stay at Martinico, you will please to receive the same & lock them up during his Stay which I hope will be short, and depend on you to make it so. You will please to take Mr Reed by the hand, procure him proper lodgings and soon as possible obtain for him a passage in a good Ship to France, either Nantes or Bourdeaux. You must agree for his pasage, supply him with Money to pay his expences whilst with you & to pay for his Sea Stores & passage to France, get him away soon as you can with good recommendation to the Captain & officers of the Ship to treat him kindly & well and when he embarks deliver him the dispatches again together with any you may think necessary to send by the same Conveyance. I make no doubt but you will be very attentive to make his time both short & agreeable in Martinico & you'l transmit his receipt for amount of your supplys to him to the Committee of Secret Correspondence with a draft on them in favour of the Secret Committee for the amount . . . P.S. If you receive the dispatches by Capt Biddle in time they had best go by this young Gentleman also." MdBj-G.

<sup>4</sup> This day Morris also wrote a brief letter to the commissioners at Paris covering a copy of the December 21, 1776, letter to them from the Committee of Secret Correspondence, reporting that "I have this day written to Mr. Bingham a full State of Intelligence to this time desiring him to transmit you Copies of that letter." Franklin Papers, PPAmP.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes of Debates

[February 26, 1777]<sup>1</sup>

The Question for raising the interest of loan office certificates from 4 to 6 per cent was determined in the Affirmative by the following states NH, MB, C, NJ, P, V, and G. In the negative RI, N & S.C.—Maryland divided.<sup>2</sup>

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. For a description of these notes, see Rush's Notes on Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

<sup>1</sup>The date of this small portion of Rush's notes has been determined from a comparison with the journals and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates this date. See *JCC*, 7:158.

<sup>2</sup>The Maryland delegates in attendance this day were undoubtedly Samuel Chase and William Smith. The Maryland Assembly had elected a new slate of delegates on February 15—Chase, Smith, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, William Paca, Benjamin Rumsey, and Thomas Stone—but Carroll, Paca, and Stone were attending the Maryland Senate at Annapolis at this time. Moreover, Stone had declined his election on February 22; and Rumsey had apparently left Congress soon after word arrived on February 17 that a British expedition to the Chesapeake was planned. For the Maryland delegates' credentials, which were submitted by Chase on February 18, see *JCC*, 7:131. Stone's February 22 letter of resignation to the Maryland Assembly is in the Etting Collection, PHI; but see also *Votes and Proceedings of the Senate of the State of Maryland, February Session, 1777*, p. 16, DLC(ESR).

In a letter that has not been found (probably written on February 25 when Congress renewed discussion of raising the interest on loan office certificates), Chase had solicited the Maryland House of Delegates' view on the subject, but the house response obviously came too late to influence its delegates' vote in Congress. The following entry from the House of Delegates' proceedings for February 26 nevertheless makes clear Maryland's opposition to increasing interest rates. "Mr. Speaker laid before the house a letter from Samuel Chase, Esq; one of the delegates of this state in congress, relative to the borrowing money on interest, for and on behalf of the continent . . . and thereupon the house taking the same into consideration, Resolved, That it is the opinion of this house, that no more than four per cent interest ought to be given for money to be borrowed on the credit of the United States, unless in cases of absolute necessity for defraying the public expenses, where no other better mode can be adopted, then, and in case of such necessity, this house are of opinion five per cent may be given." *Votes and Proceedings of the House of Delegates of the State of Maryland, February Session, 1777*, p. 25, DLC(ESR).

## Secret Committee to William Bingham

Sir

Philada. Feby 26th. 1777

You will find enclosed herein an Invoice & bill of Loading for 31 Casks of the best Carolina Indico Containing 8795 lb & 35 bbls of Superfine flour the whole amounting to £4731.18.6 this Currency being Invoiced at the real Cost, by which you will see how high a price these Articles stand in here and we hope you will exert yourself to make them bring an equivalent in Martinico. You will sell these Goods to the best advantage and place the Net Proceeds to our Credit. You must supply Capt Young with what may be necessary to pay the Charges of the Sloop & transmit us his receipt for the same, We hope he will be very moderate in those Charges and to be so, he must make dispatch to which we expect you will Contribute all in your power.

We have been advised by Mr. Deane that he shou'd ship to your address this Winter considerable supplies of Military Stores, Cloathing &c

for Account & risque of the Continent. There is little doubt but some or all of these are with you before this date, and if so, you will please to Ship a proportion of them onboard this Sloop Independance Consigned to our Order & transmit us Invoice & bill of Loading for what you Ship. The Articles most Wanted are good Soldiers Musquets, Brass Field pieces, Powder, Tent Cloth & Soldiers Cloathing. Send as many of these articles as may make the Value by this Sloop from £3000 to £5000 Sterlg first Cost and you cannot be in too much haste in getting them away. Shou'd any disappointment have taken place & the Stores from Mr Deane have not arrived, you will then purchase as much of the Articles already mentioned as you can & dispatch the Sloop back with them.

The Hornet, Capt Nicholson, went from hence to Charles Town South Carolina from whence she proceeds to you with Rice & Indico. We hope she will arrive safe and you must also send her directly back for this Coast with similar supplys to these now ordered by the Independance and we shall Continue making you remittances as fast as we can get opportunities of doing it with any tolerable degree of safety. Flour is very scarce & dear here & will continue so, as the last Crops were the Worst ever known & the Consumption & destruction of two Armies is immense.

We are, sir, Your Obedt hble servants, For & by order of the Secret Committee of Congress, Robt Morris, Chair Man

RC (DLC). Written and signed by Morris.

## Secret Committee to Robert Morris

Sir

Baltimore Feby. 26th 1777

We take the opportunity of a Waggon going to Camp with money, to send to your care one hundred and twenty thousand dollars which Congress ordered for the Secret Committee to answer the purchases of woollens &c made for the Army by Messrs. Turnbull & Livingston. But since this conveyance stops at the Camp, we think some safe and speedy method should be fallen upon to convey this money to Messrs. Turnbull & Livingston, which we pray you to undertake.<sup>1</sup> As a Clothier General is now appointed, it appears to us that the end of their Agency is superceeded, and that they should be so informed, and desired to make up their accounts and settle them with this Committee immediately, after delivering to the Clothier General or his order all the goods purchased for the army and taking his or their receipts for the same as vouchers for this Committee.<sup>2</sup> If you approve this, be pleased to give such information &



directions to the above Gentlemen. We are getting the Caroline (a ship of 600 hogsheads) ready with all expedition, and propose ordering her to Mr. Stephen Stewart to load, because he says that about 400 hogsheads of his purchase are not of quality to venture being kept. The Brig we purchased will be ordered to Messrs. Hunters, and we think of directing a small Ship to Rappahannock that we are agreeing for with Mr. Dugan which lays now at Dartmouth, and which we have proposed to charter on terms reasonable enough for the Continent.<sup>3</sup> We think it wise to enlarge our purchase of tobo. before the rage of excessive demand contaminates Virginia as it has done this and the Northern States. With this view we have desired Mr. Thomas Jett a Merchant of established reputation at Leeds Town in the Northern Neck to purchase one thousand hogsheads on the most reasonable terms he possible can.

We are with esteem and regard, Sir your most obedient and very humble servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Wm. Whipple

Fras. Lewis

RC (N). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> This letter was undoubtedly written to Robert Morris in his capacity as chairman of the Secret Committee. The money, which had been advanced to the committee on February 15, was sent from Philadelphia by express on March 6. See *JCC*, 7:126; and Summary of Secret Committee Proceedings, March 6, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> On January 10 Washington had appointed James Mease as clothier general of the Continental Army. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 6:492. Regarding the settlement of accounts with the Secret Committee, see *JCC*, 7:220-21.

<sup>3</sup> See Secret Committee to the Massachusetts Council, March 27, 1777.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

[February 27, 1777]

The Question for adjournment came on again and Virginia, South Carolina and Maryland strenuously opposed it as exceedingly impolitic and Improper. Their arguments were very Conclusive but entirely ineffectual. North Carolina only observed that he would give his dissent on such Terms as might make an Impression on the memory of the Gentlemen present, that he would spare this could he enter it on the Journals but since he could not he must provide by this means for his Defence, in case he should be Impeached hereafter for any thing passing in Congress, he must expect to call on the Gentlemen as Witnesses how he voted, since he could not produce the Testimony of the Journals. That he was sorry to perceive that a predetermined Majority was as much a Ratio ultima in Congress as in the British Parliament. That he was no way anxious for

the personal safety of Congress, he believed if they were all killed or Captivated public Business would Suffer no other Injury except the delay until other members could be chosen, that he knew his Country had much better men than himself; and he believed every State has as good as any in Congress, but he would give his Negative for the plain reason that it was very Imprudent to put a certain stop to Important Business, and run a very precarious hazard of resuming it again even after an Interval of some Weeks which would be an Inevitable delay. The adjournment was carried, for it M.B., R.I., Connecticut, N.J., Pennsylvania, Georgia; against it New Hampshire, Maryland, Virginia, N. Carolina, S. Carolina.<sup>1</sup> The same day Mr Chase from Maryland offered a resolution for entering all the Proceedings whether passing in the negative or affirmative on the Journals, and the Yeas and No's if any state required it, also that the Congress doors should be opened, except on particular Occasions, and all Debates held in public. He was Seconded by North Carolina who observed it was very proper the Congress should have the public check on them, and that as every member was liable to be impeached by the State he represented, it was a Justice to him and to the State that his votes should be entered on the Journals, that the state might be furnished with Testimony to prosecute, and the delegate with Testimony to defend himself--postponed.<sup>2</sup>

MS (NN). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:164.

<sup>2</sup> Chase's resolution is in *JCC*, 7:164n. Congress did not agree to enter votes in its journal until August 2, 1777. *JCC*, 8:599.

## Samuel Chase to the Maryland Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Baltimore 27 Feby. 1777.

Congress adjourned this Day to Philada. there to meet on Wednesday next. Captain Deames Company is ready to march, but there are no officers. I beleive there is a Lieutent. but the board of war is informed he is a worthless drunken Fellow. The Captain is unfit for the Command, and to send such a Company without some good officers will reflect a Disgrace on our State and injure the Service. I advised Capt. Deames to send forward his Company, & to wait on You for the Appointmt of officers.

I hear Nothing from Camp, worthy of Notice, except that Genl. Howe has received a Reinforcement, of 4,000, from Rhode Island.

Your's Respectfully,

Saml Chase

RC (MdAA).

## Executive Committee to Philip Schuyler

Sir

February 27. 1777

By Order of the Board of War we send from this Town for the use of the Northern Army the quantity of Gun Powder mentioned underneath.<sup>1</sup> The conveyance is by Waggon which are to proceed to Esopus on the way to Albany. The particular directions respecting the Rout and delivery are given by Mr Erwin the Waggon Master. We are in expectation of receiving a further quantity of Gun Powder from Baltimore to be also forwarded to you which shall be immediately done on its arrival. We some time ago ordered about Three Tons of Steel from hence and four tons of Nail Rod Iron from Bucks County in this State, which we hope has before this reached you at Albany.

We are Sir, Your mot. Obedt. servts.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 133).

<sup>1</sup> In a February 7 letter printed above, the Board of War had requested the Executive Committee to send "twenty Tons of Cannon & ten Tons of Pistol Powder" to Schuyler.

## John Hancock to Robert Morris

My Dear Sir

Baltim. Feby. 27th. 1777

I inclose you the Resolves of Congress respecting the Augmentation of the Interest,<sup>1</sup> I hope it will now have the Effect of Taking off all the Certificates at the Loan offices, I think if Monied Men will not give in their Money it will argue a want of Patriotism at least. My Dr Friend, you have Reduc'd me to a most distress'd Scituation as I find by a Letter this moment Rec'd from Mr Tailor my Secry. that you had Counter-order'd my Waggon. What I shall do, I know not, I can't get any here. Congress is Adjourn'd to Philada. & I must be there on Wednesday next 10 oClock AM, & I cannot Remove my Papers, & by this Stoppage of the Waggon am oblig'd to leave the whole of my Family behind. For God's Sake, hurry the Waggon along, I know you did it for the best, but it has distress'd me immensely; let me intreat you to order the Waggon on instantaneously. Thompson is oblig'd to Stay behind for want of those Waggon. I shall set off on Saturday alone to my great Mortification, & hope to meet the Waggon on the Road. Aid me all you can, pray hurry the Waggon, or Business will suffer amazingly. God Bless you, I am, Yours Sincerely,

John Hancock

[P.S.] You will print the Resolves as to the Interest.

RC (MdBj-G).

<sup>1</sup> See JCC, 7:158.



## Richard Henry Lee to George Washington

My dear Sir,

Baltimore Feby. 27th 1777

My brother Delegates are of opinion that the inclosed papers may avail you something in settling some disputes about rank that may come before you, and therefore it is sent.<sup>1</sup> Congress never did anything in this matter, as the business was put into other hands. I really think that when the history of this winters Campaign comes to be understood, the world will wonder at its success on our part. With a force rather inferior to the enemy in point of numbers, and chiefly militia too, opposed to the best disciplined troops of Europe; to keep these latter pent up, harrassed, and distressed—but more surprising still, to lessen their numbers some thousands by the sword and captivity! All this Sir must redound to your glory, and to the reputation of the few brave men under your command. But whilst I wonder at your success, I am really astonished at the supineness of the people, to suffer your army to be so thin, whilst a cruel, implacable enemy is in the Country, and have providentially put themselves in the way of destruction, if the numbers of people that are not far off, would turn out for the purpose! We have done every thing in our power to hasten up the new Levies, and strengthen your hands, but the want of arms and cloaths, with the small pox obstructs and delays us prodigiously. Industry and patience will I hope surmount all obstacles, and at length collect an army together that will bid defiance to despotism, and secure the liberties of North America. About a fortnight ago, I received a letter from London, written by a well informed friend, which contains this paragraph and is dated Octr. 9th last. "The war is likely to go on another year, in which case Cheasapeak Bay will be the seat; a plan for that purpose has been laid before Ld. Geo. Germaine & it is said is approved. The Eastern Shore is the first object, or place of landing." This letter reached me just as three or 4 large Ships came lately into our Bay, and the Tory rising on the Maryld. Eastern Shore seemed to denote the beginning of this plan. But since, we learn that the Ships are gone & the Tories dispersed. My Informant is however so good, that I cannot help thinking something like a diversion, at least, will be attempted there next Campaign. I cannot think they mean to relinquish their grand plan of joining their Canadian with Howes army. This consideration has ever made me wish that Ticonderoga, and the avenues leading to Canada, were well attended to, that the vigilance and Military talents of Gen. Carleton may be disappointed.

We are informed by our Agent in Martinique<sup>2</sup> 7th of Jany. that a Spanish General, in a Frigate bound to S. America, called at that place in distress, sought opportunities of assuring him of the King of Spains good will to assist these States, and that a loan of money might be obtained from that Court. He further said that a land and Sea force was gone to South America, where hostilities were before that time commenced with



Portugal. The French finances are low, but the Spanish are not so, and the opportunity is so tempting that I think a general war in Europe unavoidable. At least, I hope so. I have sent you inclosed, the translation of a letter from Doctr. De Bourg to Doctr. Franklin which lately came to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. It furnishes much useful information, and evidences the old Gentlemans strong attachments to our cause. He is a Philosopher, a Physician, and a friend to America—And his interest at Court very considerable.

I have now to ask your pardon for this long letter, it is against my plan of not disturbing you, but perhaps it may be excused as I do it but seldom.

I am at all times, and places, and upon every occasion; dear Sir Your most affectionate friend and obedient servant,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> An enclosed "Memorandum" listed eleven foreign officers and briefly described their military experience and the commitments made to them.

<sup>2</sup> William Bingham.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham and Richard Harrison

Gentlemen

Philadelphia Feby. 27th. 1777

The Council of Safety of Maryland by their President Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer Esqr. have desired me to remit you sufficient Funds to discharge an Obligation you were forced to enter into on account of a certain Capt. Patterson who commanded one of their armed Vessells and committed some Depredations within the Jurisdiction of Martinique.<sup>1</sup> I suppose this Remittance must be accomplished by shipping Produce to Martinique unless I can purchase a Bill. You may depend that I will do one or the other soon as possible and that I remain, Gentlemen, Your Obedt. hble servant,

Robt Morris

RC (PHarH). In a clerical hand and signed by Morris.

<sup>1</sup> For Morris' brief February 21 letter to Jenifer on the subject of the obligation incurred by Bingham and Harrison in behalf of Maryland, see *Md. Archives*, 16:150.

## Robert Morris to John Bradford

[February 27, 1777]

[. . .] My Friend Carter Braxton Esqr. of Virginia, that he has made a Contract there for a quantity of flour agreeable to directions I gave him sometime ago on perceiving that this Article wou'd become scarce & dear

both here & in Maryland. I shall now point out employmt. for the Brig that will probably be more agreeable to you than the other, it is this; fit her out instantly, put onboard some of the Wines & Porter you mention with a little Rum, Sugar &c no great Value perhaps £500 to £600 Lawfull Money at most, dispatch her immediately for Virginia with orders to the Captain to go up James River to Colo Banisters Mills & from thence send an Express to Colo Carter Braxton at Cherry Cook near New Castle on York River Virginia. Mr. Braxton will immediately give orders for receiving the Goods he brings & to have him loaden with flour with which he may proceed back to your address. I have Perfect confidence both in Mr Braxton & you, and am therefore convinced the business of buying & selling will be managed to the best advantage on both sides. This business if you please shall be divided into thirds, one third your Acct., one third Mr Braxtons & one third mine, that is if he agrees to it. If not it shall be half your Acct & half mine. If Mr Braxton has a share you must fix the freight he is to pay backward & forward & in order to do this with propriety, I wou'd have you charter another fast sailing small Vessell of about 500 to 600 barrells burthen and send her in a fortnight or three Weeks after the Brig. Then the terms you make for one will do for the other, but if you cannot charter & can buy another suitable Vessell for this purpose on reasonable terms do it, on our joint acct or in thirds if Mr. Braxton agrees to be Concerned. These two Vessells if lucky may keep you supplied with flour all next Summer and the price in Virginia will be cheaper than here or at Balto. The Cargoes shall each voyage be charged at the Current price there whether it be more or less than my Contract which being for 10,000 barrells will lead me into a heavy advance of money & I ought to get some thing by it. You will no doubt get carefull good Skippers that know your Coast well & if they go far enough off before they stand in for Virginia Capes I think there is not much danger, but beside this Concern I shou'd like also to have another Vessell if to be bought reasonably to execute the Georgia & Martinico plan and hope you will expect the whole, and in order to supply you with present Funds for my part I send you beside the Two thousand Dollars already mentioned Loan office Notes for Four Thousand Dollars bearing Interest of 4 per cent. I expect the Continental Interest must be raised to six per Cent as your State & others give it, therefore I cannot doubt but these Notes will command the cash when wanted, you will therefore keep them for my Acct. until you invest the money as above directed & then you'l Credit me for the Interest due to that time. Shou'd you not make any other purchases you'l keep the Notes for my Acct. untill further orders. I am advised from Balto. that the British Ships of War have left Chesapeak Bay; if so its likely they will visit ours again. I am sir, Your Obedt hble servt,

Robt Morris

RC (Sol Feinstein, Washington Crossing, Pa., 1976). Beginning of the letter—apparently four pages—missing. Endorsed: "27 Febr 1777. Mr. Morris Letter with the 2000 Dollars."

## Robert Morris to Silas Deane

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 27th. 1777

You will receive herewith Copy of a letter I wrote you the 11th Jany on Commercial matters, also Copy of one dated 31st Jany respecting my Brother. The Contents of both are hereby Confirmed and I am sorry it is not in any power to own the receipt of any fresh letters from you or him. The state of suspence I am left in makes me very uneasy especially on his Account, however I must wait with patience to have my doubts cleared up & hope it will be done more to my satisfaction than my present (*doubts*) fears suggest.

I have not received any Goods from you or him, neither have I heard of any being sent by you either for this place or the West Indies. If you have from any cause that I am unacquainted with Neglected doing it, you may have leisure to repent hereafter that you missed so fine an opportunity of making a Fortune. The prices of all Imported Articles have been enormously high. I could have sold any quantity of European Manufactures for 500 to 700 per Cent and bought Tobo for 25/ to 30/ per Cent. It is not yet too late, but Goods are becoming rather more plenty & Tobacco is rising, but there is plenty of room to make as much money as you please and if insurance could be obtained in Europe it might be reduced to a certainty even if you gave a premium of 5 per Cent which however is vastly too high. I think some good hand might be found to go over to London & manage such Insurances there. They love high premiums & will insure any thing for money but this would really be to their advantage as I dont think we have lost above a fourth or at most a third of the inward bound vessells. I am sorry to tell you there are now two or three British Men of War in Chesapeak Bay. They have taken the Ship Farmer, Cap Dashiell, which had on board 500 hogsheads of Tobo on the Public Account & 50 hogsheads on my Acct was bound for Nantes Consigned to Messrs Pliarne, Penet & Co. They have for the present blocked up several others there but we shall get them away by & by. Some ships have lately got away from hence and we shall keep waiting all opportunities to push remittances to you. I do not like to enumerate the different Concerns going forward because it opens our designs to the Enemy shou'd the letters unfortunately fall into their hands.<sup>1</sup>

At present I will not enlarge but in hopes of hearing from you soon remain, Dr sir, Your affectionate Friend & Servant, Robt Morris

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Morris also sent Deane the following letter this day.

"The letter enclosed herein [*not found*] was sent to me by our mutual Friend Ned Rutledge requesting me to transmit it to Europe and he desires me to mention the Young Gentn to whom it is directed particularly to you as a Gentn. of Family & Fortune deserving of great attention. He wishes you & the other Am-

bassadors to Notice him as an American that is one day or other to make a Figure in these United States. I am sure nothing more need be said on this Subject." Deane Papers, CtHi.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Dear Sir

Philada. Feby 27th. 1777

I have your favour of the 22d Inst.<sup>1</sup> which wears a very serious countenance and the opinion I entertain of the Strength of your Judgement and propriety of your observations, creates doubts in my mind which I confess I had discarded, as to the safety of this City. From various accounts I have been taught to believe that the Enemy have since Christmass lost so many Horses, are in such want of Forage, and their remaining Cavalry so worn down, that the defects in this department alone wou'd render any Movement of their Main body impossible without strong reinforcements. If such be their situation, a reinforcement of men without fresh & large supplys of Horses, waggons & Forage, wou'd only embarras them, and oblige 'em the sooner to quite their present station, and probably this may still happen, but when I find you so very Urgent to have the public Stores removed from hence, knowing as you must, that the expence & loss or Waste arising by such removal, amounts almost to the same thing as a total destruction of them It serves to convince me I have been misinformed as to the real state of the Enemy with respect to Horses, Waggons & Forage, especially as you don't say one Word of their deficiencies in these articles that I remember. I have therefore complied literally with your wishes & the Committee have given orders to every department to remove all Stores not immediately wanted, as fast as they can.

It seems to me however that the Enemy will be pressed with very great difficultys in their designs on this place. Allowing some degree of truth to their want of Horses, Waggons and Forage, those wants will be infinitely more felt since the late fall of Snow than before, for the Snow before it melts will exceedingly impede the motions of the stoutest Horses. They will require more dry food as nothing can be got from the sod and the difficulty of obtaining such food, as I apprehend, will be greatly encreased by your parties particularly the Rifle Men. When the Snow melts it will render the Road totally impassible for the Carriages must then be dragged through mud instead of Snow, in short my Dear Sir I cannot help conceiving that General Howe's situation somewhat resembles that of a strong Bull in Trammells, sensible of his own strength, he grows mad with rage & resentment when he finds himself deprived of the use of it. The Bull may not so well understand the causes of his disappointment & therefore may be more patient & I fancy if my picture has any resemblance to the truth patience wou'd be of great use to the



British Commander. If you find him embarrassed in these trammells provided by kind Providence I hope you will be able to teaze & harrass him untill our New Enlistments shall put him in your power, or oblige him to take shelter onbd the Shipping provided for that & other purposes.

I do not like to be too sanguine & yet it is very necessary in a Contest like this we are engaged in to view the best side of the Picture frequently. Remember good Sir, that few men ever keep their feelings to themselves, & that it is necessary for example sake that all leaders shoud feel & think bold in order to inspirit those that look up to them. Heaven (no doubt for the noblest purposes) has blessed you with a Firmness of mind, Steadiness of Countenance and patience in sufferings that give you infinite advantages over other men. This being the case you are not to depend on other Peoples exertions being equal to your own. One mind feeds & thrives on misfortunes by finding resources to get the better of them, another sinks under their weight, thinking it impossible to resist and as the latter description probably includes the majority of mankind we must be cautious of alarming them. Under this Idea I have been backward about removing the public stores, well knowing that a panic is sooner caused than retrieved, and I confess myself much hurt at finding you concerned. Your admonitions on that score were not attended to; during our greatest alarm here and when our prospects were of the worst, when my inward feelings were most wrung, I put a good face on things and was then Convinced it was of infinite use. I hate deception and cannot wish anything like it shou'd ever escape you, but I really think if the bright side of our affairs were sometimes to be painted by your pen or sanctified by your name it wou'd draw forth the exertions of some good men sooner than distress does from others. I hope you will excuse me for this stile of writing which almost amounts to the confidential. Was I sure of such being received in the same light in which I write it, I shou'd lament to you the absence of many great good & valueable Men from Congress, for if great care is not taken, that Body, so respectable from the Nature of the appointment, the Importance of its objects, and the respectable Characters of its heretofore individual Members, will loose great part of its Weight & Consequences in the Eyes of our own People. We have now to lament the absence from the Public Councils of America, of a Johnson, a Jay, R. R. Livingston, Duane, Deane, W. Livingston, Franklin, Dickenson, Harrison, Nelson, Hooper, Rutledge & others not less conspicuous, without any proper appointments to fill their places, and this at the very time they are most wanted, or wou'd be so, if they had not very wisely supplied the deficiency by Delegating to your Excellency Certain powers that they durst not have entrusted to any other man. But what is to become of America & its cause if a constant fluctuation is to take place amongst its Counsellors & at every change we find reason to view it with regret? However this is deviating from my own plan. I am holding up the wrong side of the picture, altho I am one of those People

who think the best part of the Community will ultimately swim at top, notwithstanding others get uppermost during the general jumble, and I can see the way to liberty & happiness through the Cloud or mist before us. I beg your pardon for takeing up so much of your time & remain Your Excellencys most Obedt & very hble Servant,

Robt Morris

P.S. I venture to tell Mr Tilghman here that I recd his letter & sent the enclosure to his Father. I hope my letter herewith to Genl Lee may go in safe & the Money be pd to him.

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's February 22 letter to Morris, reporting that "I am firmly persuaded that [the enemy] mean to attempt to reach Philadelphia again," is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:184-85.

## John Adams' Diary

1777. Feb. 28. Fryday.

Last Evening had a good deal of free Conversation, with Mr. R. Purveyance. He seems to me to have a perfect Understanding of the affairs of this State. Men and Things are very well known to him.

The object of the Men of Property here, the Planters &c., is universally, Wealth. Every Way in the World is sought to get and save Money. Land-jobbers—Speculators in Land—little Generosity to the Public—little public Spirit.

MS (MHi). Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:261.

## Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter

My dear Colonel,

Baltimore Febry. 28. 1777

I was well pleased to find by yours of the 21st Jan. that you were in good health & spirits; may you long continue so. You will no longer accuse the Congress of timidity, when you know it has adjourned to meet next week in Philadelphia,<sup>1</sup> and I assure you it is as much in Genl. Howe's power to come there now, as it was when we left it. He has bro't a large reinforcement from Rhode Island, & has now at least [——] men in the Jerseys; Genl. Washington, has not above 4,000, the greater part militia; most of the troops for the new Army, as yet collected, being under inoculation. Our worthy genl. has indeed made a most glorious winter campaign. He has never had above 5000 men, tho three times that number have often been under arms, marching to & from the Camp; militia like. It will hardly be beleived in Europe, that it cou'd be contrived,

with such a handfull or raw militia, to gain such great advantages over 7 or 8000 well appointed regulars. However if Mr. Howe makes use of the present opportunity, we may suffer a good deal. Our hope is, that the small number & leanness of his horses, will make it difficult for him to move his artillery; in which alone they put their trust. Indeed it will be some time before we shall be able to take the feild, with any thing of a respectable Army, for the militia has not only exhausted our treasury, but plunder'd us of arms, blankets & every other necessary which was provided for the new Army. We have many good vessels abroad to repair the damage but it cannot be done soon; so that we must continue for some time longer, to scramble thro' our difficulties. These little alarms will habituate our people to look danger & distress in the face, for, all things consider'd, we may think ourselves well off, if at last we are victorious after suffering much more than we have done. I do not mean to doubt our being victorious, but we may suffer much, unless France & Spain give us a little respite. This we have some reason to expect, for our last intelligence was from our Agent at Martinique, a large Spanish armament was gone to S. America. The Genl. put into Martinique & inform'd him that he might be assured hostilities were by that time commenced against the Portuguese. He often took occasion to assure him of the friendship of his Master for the American States, & that he wou'd assist them in any manner that might be most serviceable. The Agent likewise saw a Letr. from the K. of France to the Genl. of the Islands, who had some time before solicited leave to return home; in which the King conjures him, by his regard for his Country & love of Him, to remain there to take the command of his Army which wou'd soon require an Officer of the greatest abilities. We soon expect authentic intelligence from France, which will enable us to judge with some certainty of this matter.

I hope you will continue vigourously to counteract the despondency, which I am sorry to hear you say, prevails in Virginia. She is consider'd as the most spirited state in the Union, & I hope will maintain the character her Sons have acquired immortal honor abroad; 'twou'd be a pity, it shd. be tarnished by any timidity at home.

Goddard you will see has published your paper, I wish it may have a proper influence upon whom it may concern. He shall send you his Gazette. As I suppose you cannot have the benefit of the papers I send to Mt. Airy, as usual, I have sent you several in which you will find many things to please & divert you. Genl. Lee lately wrote to Congress, desiring a comtee to confer with him on his & public affairs. It was consider'd as a sneaking trick of Howe's, to hold out the delusive idea of treaty & reconciliation & thereby throw a langour upon our preparation; and therefore instantly & unanimously rejected.<sup>2</sup> But the tories are making their use of it, by asserting that honorable terms of peace have been offer'd us, but surely our people will not always continue to be

the dupes of these infamous wretches. Our best respects to Mr C., Lady & family. Adieu my dear Col.

Francis Lightfoot Lee

RC (MdbJ-G).

<sup>1</sup> Lee apparently did not return immediately to Philadelphia. In his March 24 letter to Robert Purviance, written from Annapolis, Lee noted that "tomorrow I set off for Philadelphia." Gratz Collection, PHi. And according to his accounts with the Commonwealth of Virginia, he next attended Congress on April 2, 1777. Emmet Collection, NN.

<sup>2</sup> See Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 21, 1777.

## Secret Committee to Robert and Samuel Purviance, Jr.

In Secret Committee of Congress  
Baltimore Feby. 28th, 1777

Gentlemen,

We are informed that you have in your hands Nineteen hundred and eight pounds, eight shillings & six pence this currency by a Captain Bailey as the property of Monsr. Le Croix of the Island of Hispaniola—And as it appears that the said Bailey & Monsr. Le Croix have combined together to defraud the United States of a Cargo of Flour which said Bailey was directed to deliver at another place, in consequence of which, a Brig loaded here and now in this harbor, claimed by said Le Croix hath been detained by the Secret Committee under order of Congress.<sup>1</sup> The Committee willing to interrupt foreign Commerce as little as possible but at the same time obliged to secure the public from injury have directed said Vessel & Cargo to be released, taking care to secure for the Continent the above sum of 1908 pounds, 8/6 this Currency in your hands. You are therefore desired to retain in your hands, and apply to the use of the Secret Committee that money so left with you by Capt. Bailey, and for so doing we warrant you in the name of the Congress of the United States of America.

Richard Henry Lee

Wm Whipple

Fras Lewis

RC (NjGbS). Written by Lee and signed by Lee, Lewis, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> For additional details of this affair, see *JCC*, 7:66–67.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

Baltimore 28 Feby 1777

Since my last which I think was the 18th inst I have received Yours of the 31st Decr & 22 Jany. I hope by this time a Sufficient force are at



& on their march to Ticonderoga for the defence of that Place, Congress are very sensible of the importance of it, and have done every thing in their Power to render the post secure. What remains to be done remains intirely with the executive, which is to raise the men & direct their operations. I suppose all the Troop from N.H. will be order'd to the Northward, Col. Poor is promoted to the Rank of Brigadier & I suppose will have the immediate command of those Troops. This Gentl is highly recomended by the Genls under whom he has serv'd & I hope will do Honor to his Country.

No accounts yet from our Commissioners at Foreign Courts. The last advice from France was 25th Octo by which there seems to be no doubt of a European war. Our agent at Martinico writes that he had seen a letter from the K of F to the Genl. of Hispaniola (who had asked leave to go home) desiring him to tarry as he wanted an experienced officer to command his Troops in America.<sup>1</sup> We have many hints of this sort which discovers that both F. & S. are dispos'd to break with Britain. A Spanish Genl. in his way to Cuba call'd at Martinica, & while there took every oppory of conferring with our Agent & assur'd him that his Master wo'd do every thing in his power to serve the United States & only waited for proper application which (inter nos) I expect has been made before this time. In short our affairs so far as relates to foreign Powers wear as favorable an aspect as we can Expect. The greatest difficulty we have to incounter is to keep up the credit of our Currency which must be done by Taxing the People, & clearing the Country of its Enemies, for those people who are commonly call'd Tories do more mischief in that way then we are aware of.

RC (MH-H). In Whipple's hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> For further information on these letters of Silas Deane and William Bingham, see Elbridge Gerry to Thomas Gerry, February 25, 1777, notes 1 and 2.

## James Wilson to Robert Morris

Dear Sir:

Baltimore 28 Feby 1777

I was favoured with your very friendly and obliging Letter.<sup>1</sup> It gives me Pleasure to find my Sentiments upon the Subject of my Letter Corresponds with yours. What in the name of Wonder, has induced the Assembly to reappoint me? <sup>2</sup> I am undetermined how to act; I really think I could be more useful to the Public in another Character.

I shall have the Pleasure of seeing you in Philadelphia the week after next; when we shall have an opportunity of talking over political and other Subjects.

The Adjournment to Phila[delphia] was not carried without some Difficulty and some Warmth. The Measure, I am persuaded, will have

an happy Effect upon public Affairs. The Encrease of Interest will, I hope, give a Spring to the Sinews of War.

I am, Dr Sir, Yours very sincerely,

James Wilson

Tr (PSC).

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Morris' January 31 letter to Wilson.

<sup>2</sup> See Benjamin Rush to Julia Rush, January 24, note 1; and Robert Morris to James Wilson, January 31, 1777.

## Executive Committee to George Washington

Sir

Philada. Feby 29. [*i.e.* March 1] 1777

The dispatches from Congress sent herewith came up last Night & we send them forward this morning. Soon as the Express can be ready after delivering them to you he is to go on to the Convention of New York with the enclosed letter from Congress to them and you will please to deliver it to him for that purpose unless some conveyance equally safe & expeditious but less expensive offers, in that case the express may return here. We Issued orders in writing to every Department here, that have the care of Public Stores to be prepared for the removal of them & to the quarter Master General to supply the Number of Waggons necessary for each departmt. but we feel distressed exceedingly at the necessity of doing so, because the expence & destruction occasioned thereby is terrible. They write us from Baltimore that the British Ships of War have left Chesapeake Bay, probably they may Visit us again. You wou'd see in the Boston papers an acct of Doctr Franklins arrival in France & we have the pleasure to tell you the acct is confirmed by a private letter from Bourdeaux dated 23d Decr. now in this City. As more Snow is now falling with appearance of being a heavy one, We cannot help flattering ourselves that it will afford you the means of taking many advantages of our Enemies & perhaps cause them to evacuate the Jerseys. With the Warmest wishes for your Success & happiness We are, Your Excellency's Most Obedt hble servts, for & on behalf of the Committee,

Robt Morris, Chair Man

RC (DLC).

## Richard Henry Lee to Robert Morris

Dear Sir

Baltimore March 1st 1777

As far as I am able to judge, the plan suggested in the inclosed memoir is admirably fitted to give a decided superiority to our Frigates above those of the Enemy.<sup>1</sup> If you should think so, I know you will push it into

execution with the same zeal that animates you in every thing that affects the public. Will not the churches furnish their bells to make 24 pounders for the Randolph & the Delaware when they are to be employed against an enemy who mean to extirpate religion and every thing else valuable here? Should the enemy get possession of Philadelphia, they will soon strip the churches of their bells as a perquisite for [the] chief Engineer, whereas if they are lent to us, we [shall] repay in kind. I hope you will not suffer the enemy to have the honor of getting Philadelphia.

I am with truth & esteem, affectionately yours,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DNA: PCC, item 78). Endorsed: "favored by the hon. Mr. President Hancock."

<sup>1</sup> Lee also enclosed a copy of this "memoir" in his March 6 letter to John Page from Chantilly, Va. "The inclosed is extracted from a very sensible Memoir sent to Congress by a French Artist, and which may avail us greatly in the construction of our Provincial Frigates. It is intended for the use of our Navy board to whom I should have written if the Express were not waiting for my dispatches. Gen. Howe having landed in person at Amboy, with a reenforcement and some heavy Artillery occasions much speculation, and makes it to be greatly lamented that the new raised Troops go so slowly up to Head Quarters. The American Army is now much inferior in number to the British and yet were 15,000 men now with General Washington he might finish the business of next summer this winter.

"By a letter from our Agent in Martinique 7th January I consider the war between Spain & Portugal as certainly commenced, this is South America, and learn that Doctor Franklin arrived safe at Nantes the 6 December & went directly to Paris." Samuel T. Freeman & Co. Catalog, *The Frederick S. Peck Collection of American Historical Autographs* (February 17, 1947), p. 82, item 148.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham

Sir

Philada. March 1st 1777

I have wrote you very fully lately and have only to mention in addition to what is said in the enclosed letter, that we have since had the pleasure to hear of Doctr Franklins safe arrival at Paris, and on Sunday last there was a Smart Skirmish between a Considerable Body of the Enemy & a party of ours near Brunswick. Our loss was inconsiderable but not so with them. They lost a great many men both killed & wounded. These frequent Skirmishes make Soldiers of our people and they are daily render'd weaker by them.

This goes by a very fine Brig Commanded by Capt Knox who will have orders to receive onboard any Goods you want to ship and I think it a good opportunity for you to send a quantity of the Public Stores by for she sails very fast.<sup>1</sup>

I am Sir, Your obedt Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (PHi). Addressed: "To William Bingham Esqr., Agent to the United States of America in Martinico."

<sup>1</sup> Morris also wrote Bingham the following brief letter on March 10, 1777. "Mr. Benjn. Hogeland a very worthy Young Man that has lived with Willing, Morris & Co. many Years as Book keeper requests a Credit on you which I cannot refuse, therefore beg the favour of you to supply him or answer his orders to the Amount of Fifty pounds.

"Capt. Young of the Sloop Independance also desires a Credit for One hundred Pounds but is not certain that he shall use it. However, if his occasions require I beg you will supply him & charge the amot. of both to Willing, Morris & Co." Mason-Franklin Collection, CtY.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Baltimore March 2d 1777

The bearer has permission to go to your state to solicit the discharge of the prisoners taken after the defeat at Moore's Creek. He being a simple unobnoxious creature, I consented to his going, at their request, tho' their Endeavour was to get some more knowing one. I believe his Embassy will not be very successful; for I told them, they must not expect ever to live in North Carolina on any other terms than swearing alligiance to the state & giving security for their good behaviour: but this they do not relish. They are desirous of knowing whether their families & property will be reserved for them, if they are exchanged. Farquhard Campbell speaks with much resentment & haughtiness; he seems to think the state ought to court him to become her subject. I found they were not at all secure in close confinement, & the guarding them was exceedingly expensive. I therefore consented to their being on parole in Frederick Town in this state.<sup>1</sup> They are incessant importuners, & I believe every Delegate is glad they are removed from the residence of Congress. Angus McDonald, the bearer, is to return to them if you think proper.

I am, Sir, with due respect & esteem, your Excellency's most obedt serv't,  
Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:102. A March 3 letter to Caswell from Farquhard Campbell, describing the opposition of Burke and William Hooper to the return of these prisoners to North Carolina, is in *N.C. State Records*, 11:403-5. For an earlier effort by these prisoners to return home, see William Hooper to the North Carolina Convention, November 1, 1776, note.

## John Hancock to Dorothy Hancock

My Dear

At Mr Godgraces half past 1 oClock, March 3d 1777

Thro' much bad Road I arriv'd here at 1 oClock, in good order, I assure the Roads are exceeding bad. I met Govr Johnston who is just come



from the Genl. Things look well, & I Judge we shall remain at Philada. If I find it so on my Arrival there, you may Depend I shall immediately Send for you; do as you Judge best with respect to Inoculating the Child, if there should be a prospect of your soon Coming it would be best to keep it off, but it is impossible to foresee events, I must leave it with you. My dear, I desire you will Send a piece of the best of that Linnen to Mrs. Grant as a present from me, if you should have Sent them home, pray Send to Mr. Lux & beg him to let you have another, don't fail, take as many pieces for your self as you like. Mrs. Grant's Civilities to us deserve our thanks. Don't forget the Linnen.

Dinner is Coming, I have just taken up the Venigar Bottle, poor stuff, I wish for some of Mrs. Hillegas's, but I am patient. As soon as dinner is over will give you the History of the dinner & then Close. Do Tell Mrs. Hillegas I would wish to have her husband's picture Taken on Horseback. I assure her he Cuts a most Capital figure. Adieu till after dinner.

1/4 after 2. I have got up from dinner & Standg at the Window. Dinner Serv'd up, Boil'd Beef, Roast Turkey, Ham, Roast Beef, Green Sallad, Goose Berry & Apple Tarts, Cheese, Apples &c. Baltime Punch, Wine &c. I shall write you again so soon as I Recd. one from you. Adieu, Remember me to Miss Katy, Lydia, Nancy, Katy & every one. Yours most affectey,

John Hancock

[P.S.] The Turkey was so tough that I broke out one of my Teeth.

RC (NNPM).

## John Hancock to Dorothy Hancock

At Mr Stephenson's Eastern Side of Susquehana

My Dear

Wednesday 1 oClock March 5th. 1777

I have just got on this side the Ferry, after Cutting thro' the Ice the whole way, my Carriages & horses not yet got over. I have return'd the Boat for them, but whether I shall have them over this Night I am at a Loss. I have gone thro' so many Scenes that I am thankful you are not a partaker in the disagreeable part. I have arm'd myself with Patience, I take thankfully what I can obtain, & make no difficulties. I have this Day Adjourn'd Congress as I find I shall not be there for a day or two.<sup>1</sup> I am already tir'd at being without you. I must Send for you as soon as the Roads are better. I leave word at every Tavern to Take good Care of you when you come along, & they promise me they will. My Dear, I don't Succeed so well now as before, perhaps if you was with me I should be better off. I am sure in point of Beds I should, for thro' Complaisance I suffer, I gave up my Bed last Night to Mr. & Mrs. Thornton, & Slept myself in the common Room with three Beds. I am just going to Dinner,

I propose to Set off if the Horses come over & get this Night to Mr Palmer's, the Hat Man, & shall Ride on Horseback, & put Harry & Mr Peters Maid into the Phaeton. Do Tell Mrs. Hillegas that I shall drink her health in some of Palmer's Beer, Remember me to Mr & Mrs Hillegas, I really respect them, & hope they will Come with you, as I can freely go to their house. They are just such persons as I wish, they are free from Ceremony, & I am sure I do not abound with Ceremony. My real Regards to Mr S & R Purviance & Ladies, & Miss Sukey, Complimts. to Capt. & Mrs Nicholson, how are their Children? This is the third Letter I have wrote you,<sup>2</sup> in one I desir'd you to present Mrs Grant with a piece of Linnen, which I beg you will not omit. Do Desire Mr. S Purviance, if there were any Letters for me by the Post, to Send them back to me. How is my Dear Lydia, I leave her with you, do as you like as to Inoculation, but the fewer the Impediments to your Coming to Me the better; Remember me to Miss Katy, & all in the Family without exception. How is Ned's Hand, do let him be careful, he is a good Servant. Take Care of Vilet, you know my Dear Aunt lov'd her. I beg you will let me hear from you by every Oppory. When I tell you frequent Letters from you during my Absence will give me the highest pleasure, I know you cannot omit; I left Pen, Ink & paper sufficient; if not, purchase at any price; I can with respect to you, adopt every part of Saml. Coolidge's Letter. We are all as well as our disappointment will admit, dinner is Coming in, & the Boat is returning with some horses that I shall get to Palmer's tonight. Adieu, My Dr Dolly, May the Almighty God be your constant protection. Rely on him & he will not forsake you. I am my Dr wife, Yours with the utmost Affection,

John Hancock

RC (MHi photostat).

<sup>1</sup> Congress was adjourned from day to day until March 12 because of the failure to assemble a quorum in Philadelphia. *JCC*, 7:169.

<sup>2</sup> Only two of the three letters Hancock wrote to his wife while en route to Philadelphia have been found. See preceding entry.

## Mann Page to George Weedon

Dear Sir:

Baltimore, March 5, 1777.

I wrote to you by Col. Spotswood, but by accident my letter did not fall in his way. I now enclose it to you to let you see I had not forgot you.<sup>1</sup> We have nothing worth telling you of in this place, except that Congress has been so mad as to return to Philadelphia. I am left prettily in the lurch. Expecting that we were fixed at this place, I sent back our chariot and now do not know how to move my baggage. Wives are sometimes sad incumbrances. I have not heard for some time from Virginia, but hope all are well. Why need you think the lustre of the Virginia arms is tarnished by Buckner's misconduct?<sup>2</sup> True, he is a Virginian, but

compare other Virginians with him, and they will appear in brighter colours. It is by comparison only that we judge of men and actions, therefore a few bad men or actions make good men and actions show more conspicuously. I am still in the small pox, therefore cannot write more than that I am, Your affectionate friend,

Mann Page, Jun.

MS not found; reprinted from *Papers Relating Chiefly to the Maryland Line during the Revolution*, ed. Thomas Balch (Philadelphia: Printed for the Seventy-Six Society, 1857), pp. 77–78.

<sup>1</sup> Undoubtedly a reference to Page's note of February 23, in which he informed Weedon that he was "under inoculation for the Small Pox, which makes it painful to my eyes to write more than to congratulate you upon your being appointed a Brigadier General, and to offer you my services upon any other and every other occasion." Ibid, pp. 94–95. Weedon had been appointed a brigadier general on February 21. *JCC*, 7:141.

<sup>2</sup> On February 9 a court martial had cashiered Col. Mordecai Buckner, of the Sixth Virginia Regiment, for his cowardice during a January 23 engagement near Brunswick, N.J. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:122.

## John Adams to James Warren

My dear sir,

Philadelphia March 6. 1777

Dr Jackson, by whom this will go, is a Manager of the State Lottery, and is bound to the New England States, to forward the Sale of the Ticketts. He wishes to be recommended to proper Persons for the Purpose. If you can assist him with your Advise you will do a public service.

I can give you no News—but the Skirmish at Spank town.

This State of Pensilvania, have at last compleated their Government. Wharton is Governor and Bryan Lt Governor.<sup>1</sup> Their Council too is at last filled. Johnson is Governor of Maryland.<sup>2</sup> Govr. Livingstons Speech you will see. I hope now, the Loan offices will supply us with Money, and preclude the Necessity of any further Emissions. If they dont, what shall We do? But they will.

I am at last got to think more about my own Expences than any Thing else. Twenty dollars a Cord for Wood. Three Pounds a Week for Board, meaning Breakfast, Dinner, and bed—without one drop of Liquer, or one Spark of light or fire. I am lost in an ocean of Expençe. Horse feed in Proportion—five hundred Sterling will not pay my Expences for this year—at this Rate.<sup>3</sup>

Pray make every Body who has Money lend it, that Things may not grow worse.

The loan office in this Town is very successfull.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Wharton, Jr., and George Bryan were elected president and vice-president of Pennsylvania on March 5, 1777. *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:173–74.



<sup>2</sup> Thomas Johnson had been elected governor of Maryland on February 13. *DAB*.

<sup>3</sup> This is the first known letter that Adams wrote after his return to Philadelphia. His account for expences incurred during his weeks in Baltimore is in Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:253-54.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Philadelphia March 6th. 1777

A Mr. Jackson, One of the Managers of the Continental State Lottery, called upon Me this Morning, told Me that he was going to the Eastern States with Tickets, and desired Me to recommend to him some suitable Person or Persons, in our State, with whom he might lodge a Number of them for Sale.

I told him that your Honor was better acquainted with proper Persons than myself, and would readily point him to them. Agreeable to his Request I therefore Recommend him to your Notice and beg that you would advise to whom to apply.

As a State Lottery is one of the Measures that Congress hath taken to put a Stop to the Torrent of Depretiation, I hope it will be countenanced and encouraged by the State of Rhode Island and that the Loan-Office too will be patronized and promoted. The Interest on the Loan-Office Certificates was lately raised to Six per Centum, which I should think would be a sufficient Inducement to Money-Lenders to lend their Money; especially when it is considered that if large Sums of Money can be borrowed it will tend greatly to check the sinking Credit of Continental Money, and thereby benefit them as well as others. Congress have Resolved that the Paper Bills issued by the States might be received at the Loan-Office and exchanged for Certificates; and that the Bills so received should remain there, and go as far as they might towards the Payment of the continental Debt due to the respective States;<sup>1</sup> and accordingly Letters to this Purpose have been transmitted to the Keepers of the Loan-Offices in the several States. I mention this the more particularly; because it will probably prevent Congress from ordering the Commissioner of the Loan-Office in our State to issue Notes for the Payment of the Debt due to it, which is a Mode pointed out by you in Case it should be impracticable to supply Messrs. Greene & Hoell with the Money asked for.<sup>2</sup> I returned here the Day before yesterday. The Weather hath been so bad as to prevent Members enough from coming up to make a Congress. As soon as they meet I shall use my Influence to procure an Order on the Treasury for the Money; but not with any Hopes of Success at present; for there is not more than a Million Dollars in the Treasury, and that Sum is already mortgaged. I wish



I had been notified of the Intention of the State to send Persons here for Money, before they had sent them. In that Case I would have advised to postpone the Matter until the Five Million of Dollars which are ordered to be struck should have been completed. However I will do all I can in this as well as every Matter directed by the State of Rhode Island &c; and hope I shall be able to get some Money altho' I utterly despair of obtaining a Quarter Part now of what is due. The President will I presume transmit to you the Resolves recommending it to the States not to emit more money; nor borrow at a higher Rate of Interest than Six per Cent, &c &c.

I am much obliged by the Information you have given Me; and should be glad to receive at least the Substance of all public Acts as soon as may be convenient after the rising of the Assembly; for beside the Disadvantages which may follow from Ignorance, it is a Shame for a Delegate not to be able to tell what is done in his own State.

We have nothing remarkable from the Army in the Jersey. In a Skirmish, last Sunday Week, between 800 of our Men and the Reinforcement from Rhode-Island, consisting at least of 1700, some say upwards of Two thousd. Men, our Troops had much the Advantage. We killed 50 of the Enemy at least and wounded in Proportion, took it is said a few Prisoners and a small Matter of Camp Equipage, with the Loss on our Side of only 3 or 4 Men. Some Accounts say that We killed and wounded 504; but this I believe is beyond the Truth. I rejoice to hear that General Spencer is meditating an Attack on Rhode Island. I wish that he may collect force enough to make it successfull. It is of great Importance to take Advantage of the divided State of the British Army.

I continue to be with great Esteem and Consideration, Yr. Honor's most obedt. hble Servt.

William Ellery

P.S. I write under a great Head-Ach occasd. by a bad Cold, in great Haste and upon such Paper as I could get at my Lodgings, therefore I hope I shall be pardoned. I hope my new Colleague will come on as soon as possible.<sup>3</sup>

W E

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:35-37.

<sup>2</sup> The Rhode Island Assembly had sent Jacob Greene and David Howell to Congress to seek compensation for the state's expenditures on the Continental Army and Navy. On March 12 Congress ordered the payment of \$400,000 to Rhode Island. See *JCC*, 7:172; and William R. Staples, *Rhode Island in the Continental Congress, 1765-1790* (Providence: Providence Press Co., 1870), p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> In a February 18 letter to Ellery, Governor Cooke had announced Henry Marchant's election as a Rhode Island delegate. Staples, *Rhode Island in the Continental Congress*, p. 118.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

Dear Sir,

Philada. March 6th. 1777

I am honoured with yours of the 2d Inst.<sup>1</sup> The good opinion you are pleased to entertain of me makes me very happy because there is no mans opinions I reverence more and that very circumstance is at the same time the source of trouble in my mind as you force me to abandon that Idea of Security which I was desirous of maintaining. It is truly lamentable that we have never been able to this day to Conquer that Land, a mental error made in the outset, by short enlistments, it was not untill Conviction of the absolute necessity of it Stared every man in the Face that the wholesome measure of enlisting for three years or during the War, cou'd be carried in Congress & since it was carried there, it meets with insuperable obstacles raised by the former practice, for the Bounties, high wages & short Service has Vitiated the Minds of all that Class of People & they are grown the most mercenary beings that exist. Dont confine this observation meerly to the Soldiery but extend it to those who get their livings by Feeding & entertaining of them, these are the Harpies that injure us much at this time. They keep the Fellows Drunk whilst the Money holds out, when it is gone they encourage them to enlist for the sake of Bounty, then to drinking again. That Bounty gone & more money still wanted, they must enlist again with some other officer, receive a fresh Bounty & get more Drink &c. This Scene is actually carrying on here daily & does immense injury to the recruiting Service, but still I hope our New army will be got together before long, at least so many as will enable you to put a good Face towards your Enemies and if that is accomplished I think they will not Venture this way. At present it seems to be their object and in your situation I really do not see what is to prevent their taking possession of it, unless the want of Horses, Forage &c retards their movements or renders it impracticable for them to come on. In the mean time the public Stores are removing, and Congress have adjourned back to this place, many of the Members are come up & the rest on the road. I dont expect they will make a House sooner than Monday, but your late dispatches shall be delivered to the President soon as he arrives. I wish with you Sir that they had Complied with General Lees request, and when I sent forward those dispatches to Baltimore I wrote my Sentiments to some of the members & altho it wou'd have been inconvenient for me and I urged not to be appointed on that errand yet I wou'd have gone rather than he shou'd have been disapointed. Whether they will take up the matter again or not I don't know, but I much doubt it as from the little conversation I have had with some of the members now here they seem very averse to it. However I expect this matter as well as the

Confinement of the Hessian Field officers will at least be referred to the Consideration of a Committee in Consequence of your letters on the Subject and if I can influence a Compliance with your wishes it will give me pleasure for my own Sentiments coincide with yours exactly in these two points. At the same time I must hint to you what I take to be one of the most forcive arguments that probably has been used in Congress against this Measure, I have not heard that it was used, but as it occurred at the Court of France shou'd they hear as they undoubtedly wou'd that to myself on reading Genl Lee's letters, I mean the effect it may have members of Congress Visited Genl Lee by permission of the British Commissioners. The meeting with Ld Howe at Staten Island last Summer injured Mr Deane's negotiations much & retarded supplys intended for us.<sup>2</sup>

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:221-26.

<sup>2</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Morris to Washington, March 15, 1777.

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull

Honored Sir

Philadelphia March 4th [*i.e.* 6] 1777<sup>1</sup>

The Congress adjourned from Baltimore last Thursday to meet in this City yesterday<sup>2</sup> but a Sufficient Number of Members did not come in to proceed to business. It was found very inconvenient to set at so great a distance from the Seat of War especially at a time when a new army is forming. Orders have been lately Issued to reinforce the Army in New Jerisy by calling in all the new recruits, and the neighbouring Militia. The reason given in the resolution is "The Congress being earnestly desirous to Strengthen the Army under General Washington's immediate Command So as to enable him not only to curb the Enemy & prevent their ravaging the Country & obtaining any supplies or provisions or forage, but by the Divine blessing totally to Subdue them before they can be reinforced."<sup>3</sup>

It appears to me that a vigorous exertion at this time might be attended with very happy consequences, if not totally put an end to the war, for by the best accounts the enemy are in great want of many necessaries, and much dispirited, and tis thought if they were closely pursued with Superior or equal numbers they would be obliged to Submit. Congress never gave any orders at any time not to risque a general Battel as was reported last Fall, but always left that matter to the discretion of the Commanding Officers. Congress has considered the resolutions of the Committees of the four New England States, approves of the measures for the Defence of Rhode Island, and those recommended for the Support

of their paper currencies, but do not think it advisable to Issue Bills on Interest. I think that would have no good effect, it might Interfere with the continental loans & would in my opinion burthen the particular States with a useless expence. The evils occasioned by the fluctuating and exorbitant prices of things is very sensibly felt here. Congress has referred the considering of the doings of the New England Governments as to fixing the prices of articles, to the consideration of the other States, recommending to them to appoint Commissioners to meet for that purpose & to adopt Some plan to remedy the evils aforesaid. The middle States from New York to Virginia inclusive are to meet the third Tuesday in this month.<sup>4</sup> Congress has Agreed to allow 6 per cent per annum on any monies borrowed or to be borrowed on loan office Certificates being informed from Massachusetts and Philadelphia that money could not be obtained on a lower Interest, moneyed men being unwilling to lower their incomes when the prices of all necessaries are greatly increased. The best way to preserve the Credit of the currency & render the price of articles Stable is to raise the Supplies for carrying on the war by Taxes as far as possible, & the rest by loans. It Seems to be the present opinion of the Congress that there be no further Emission of Bills than what is already ordered if it can possibly be avoided, and that the most effectual measures be taken to Support the Credit of those already emitted. Accordingly a Tax is recommended to the Several States, and as the rule to determine the Quotas is not yet Established by the legislatures of the Several States (which is to be done by the Confederation) each State is called upon to raise as large a Sum as circumstances will admit, with an Engagement to allow Interest at 6 per cent for what any State may raise more than its Just Quota of the whole Sum that Shall be raised.<sup>5</sup>

I suppose the expences of the current year will not be less than twenty million dollars, but perhaps more unless the enemy's Army Should be subdued before they can be reinforced or a diversion given to the British Arms by a war with France. I wish that I could furnish your Honr with printed copies of the Journals of Congress to this time; but notwithstanding the utmost endeavours of Congress to have them printed here, they have by one excuse or other been delayed, sometimes the printers complain of the want of paper, at other times their workmen are obliged to go with the Militia into the Field. Orders have lately been given to the Committee to agree with some printer who will perform the work.

Your Honr has doubtless been informed of the promotions lately made of General Officers in the army. Previous to the choice the Congress resolved, "That in the appointment of General officers due regard shall be had to the line of Succession, personal merit, and the number of troops raised or to be raised by the several States."<sup>6</sup> We mentioned Brigadiers Wooster and Arnold as candidates for Major generals on the two first principles, & Brigadier Wadsworth and Colo Huntington, who were



both recommended by General Washington, as fit persons for Brigadiers; but the last principle prevailed to pass them all by—viz, That Connecticut had more General Officers than in proportion to the number of Troops furnished by that State.

By a letter from Mr Dean dated Octr 25th, no authenticated account of these States having declared themselves independent had been received by him, so that nothing material had been transacted by him, except Some contracts for Goods. We have accounts in the newspapers that Doctr Franklin arrived in France the 7th of December last, but Congress has not received any Letters from him since his arrival. By the best accounts from France & Spain they are disposed to favour our cause.

I wish to know your Honrs opinion what would be most agreeable to our State as to providing for the Sick in the army, whether to have it done by Congress or each State to provide for their own troops, & whether Doctr. Turner would not be a Suitable person to be recommended as Director of a Hospital on the East side of Hudson's River, or where ever else the N.E. Troops may be stationed, or whether any other person in either of the N.E. States would be more Suitable or acceptable for Such an appointment. We were Honored with the receipt of one of your Honor's letters at Baltimore, but my papers not being here I cant refer to the date wherein your Honr mentions that it will be most Agreeable to the other Gentlemen Delegates for two of them to come together. I think it would be well to have a fuller representation at this time, and as but two, & part of the time but one has attended for a considerable time past, if four Should attend for Some time, the expence would not be more than if three had attended the whole time.

Doctr. Jackson, one of the Managers of the Lottery of the united States by whom I expect to send this, is on a Journey through New England to dispose of the lottery tickets. He requested me to recommend to him Suitable persons in Connecticut to receive a number of them for Sale. I accordingly recommended Thaddeus Burr Esqr. in Fairfield County, Samll. Bishop Esqr. in New Haven & John Lawrence Esqr. in Hartford and took the Liberty to refer him to your Honr to advise him to Suitable persons in the Eastern counties. I me[ntioned] Doctr. Smith for Litchfield County.

I am, very respectfully, your Honrs Obedient, humble Servant,  
Roger Sherman

P.S. General Wolcott is well.

RC (Ct). FC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Sherman began a variant draft of this letter on March 4, but on the second page of the draft he reported that "the Assembly of this State elected a President & Vice President yesterday who have the same authority as Govr. & Deputy Governor—Thomas Wharton Junr Esqr is President and George Bryan Esqr Vice President." Miscellaneous Bound Collection, MHi. Since Wharton and Bryan were

elected during a joint session of the Pennsylvania Council and Assembly on March 5, Sherman must have completed his draft on the sixth, but then failed to correct the date when he revised and copied the RC. See *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:173-74.

<sup>2</sup> "To Morrow" in draft.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:150; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 24, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> The day appointed for the middle states meeting was correctly reported as the "third Monday" in the draft. See *JCC*, 7:124.

<sup>5</sup> The report of the committee on ways and means, which was in Sherman's hand, had contained similar recommendations and been read in Congress on February 20. See *JCC*, 7:138.

<sup>6</sup> See *JCC*, 7:133.

## Summary of Secret Committee Proceedings

[ca. March 6, 1777] <sup>1</sup>

Baltimore. Jany. 4. 1777. The Committee consisting of Richard Henry Lee, Wm. Whipple & Frans. Lewis Esqrs. issued the following drafts on Michael Hillegas Esqr. the Continentl. treasurer. Jany. 4th. In favor of Alexandr. Gillon Esqr. on Acct. for 9333 2/3 dlls to be chargd to his Acct. 7th. In favor of Messrs. Lux & Bowley for 6666 2/3 dlls, sent from Philada. by Mr. Morris & to be chargd to his Acct. 10th. In favor of Wallace & Davidson for 19382 1/6 dlls. This Bill sent by Mr. Morris is to be chargd to his Acct. In favor of David Steward<sup>2</sup> 48000 dlls. This bill sent by Mr. Morris & to be chargd to his Acct. 21st. In favor of John Nixon & Co for 16069 27/90 dlls. This bill sent by Mr. Morris to be chargd sd. J. Nixon & Co. for Ship Hopes cargo. Feby. 1st. In favor of Saml. & Rob. Purviance for 28,000 dlls to be chargd to their Acct. 6th. In favor of Stephen Steward for 4000 dlls to be chargd to Mr. Morris. 8th. In favor of Messrs. Js. & Adam Hunter for 20000 dlls. This bill sent by Mr. Morris to be chargd to him. 18th. In favor of Stephn. Steward for 8000 dlls to be chargd to Mr. Morris. 22d. In favor of Hewes & Smith for 8000 dlls sent them by Mr. Mushraw & to be chargd to Mr. Morris. 27th. In favr. of Messrs. S. & R. Purviance for 12000 dlls to be chargd them.

Baltimore Feby. 27. 1777. The Come. issued an order on the Treasurer in favor of Ths. Jett Esqr. for 10,000 dlls to be chargd to his Acct.<sup>3</sup>

During the residence of the Come. at Baltimore they wrote several Letters to the Agents in France & on the Continent as appears by copies of sd. Letters. The Come. orderd Messrs. S. & R. Purviance of Baltimore to purchase for the public Acct. two prize vessels at that port, a quantity of pig iron &c Accts. of wch. are to be furnishd. They ordered Mr. Stephen Steward to purchase for the public acct. a quantity of tobacco. They orderd Thos. Jett Esqr. to buy 1000 hhds tobo. for pub. acct. as appears by letter to them.

Philadelphia. During the residence of the Comme at Baltimore the Chairman Mr. Morris transacted the followg. business at this place.

1776. Decr. 14. Paid Capt. Nath. Falconer the balance of an Acct. of this expences to the Eastwd. when he was sent by the Secret & Marine Comes. to transact public business -----	177.10.
20th Paid Oswall Eve balance of his Acct. for manufacturg. Gunpowdr.-----	127.7.6
1777. Feby. 15. Paid Capt. Jeremiah Morgan to be chargd to his Acct.-----	80.
15. Paid Capt. Saml. Smith junr. of the Ship Hancock & Adams <sup>4</sup> toward the freight of sd. vessel to be chargd her owner B[lai]r Meclanaghan-----	1125.
18. Paid J.R. Livingston Esqr. in part for manufacturg. gunpowder-----	258.11.3
24. Paid Js. Fulton for portorage of G. powder &c.---	13.12
24. Paid Mr. Blaquiere for the fol[lowin]g Stores purchasd. from him: 89 Casks powdr. Wt 7104 lb at 4s, £2486.8.0. 18 Kegs flints 24400 at 40s, 48.16.0. 2 Bales match rope 135 lb [at] 15d, 8.8.9. 3 ream Cartge paper [at] 24s, £3.12-----	2547.4.9
Feby. 3d. Paid Capt. Danl. Bigelow of the Sloop Ranger for demurrge on sd. sloop while detain'd in this port, to be chargd Messrs. Silas & Barnabas Deane -----	51.
Do. 13th. G. Losch in part for manufactg. Gunpowder -----	250.
J. Russel the amount of his Acct. for storage of Salt petre -----	11.
<hr/>	
£4641. 6.4	

The Cash for paying the above Accts. was supplied by the Marine Come. & the Navy board has been directed to charge the Acct. to this Come. in their books.

An order was drawn on Capt. Biglow of the Sloop Ranger, to deliver Comy. Carpenter Wharton for the use of the Army, all the Salt imported in sd. sloop from Curraco to be plac'd to the credit of Messrs. S. & B. Deane.

Feby. 8th. Recd. from the Come. of Congress an order on Ths. Smith L. Officer of the State for 10,000 dlls in Certificates, wch. was receiv'd & sent to J. Bradford Esqr. at Boston by Patrick McCloskey an Express, to be laid out in the purchase of Goods for the pub. Acct. agreeable to orders now transmitd. him.

March 6th. Recd. from Michl. Hillegas Esqr. C[ontinenta]l Treasr. at Baltimore 120,000 dlls, wch. was brought up & deposited in the hands of Messrs. Mease & Caldwell & taken afterward from them & this day

sent off to Boston, by Freeman Palsifer an express to be delivered Messrs. Livingston & Turnbull then agts. for purchasing cloathing in the Eastn. States.

MS (MH-H). This entry is preceded by the copyist's notation that "Here the Minutes begin in the handwriting of Mr. Robert Morris" and by the statement that "On examining the papers delivered me, by the Committee on their return from Baltimore I find they did not keep any book of Minutes therefore the following are extracted from the said Papers. R. Morris."

<sup>1</sup> This date has been assigned because the last "summary" paragraph in the Journal of the Secret Committee appears under the date March 6.

<sup>2</sup> At this point the copyist keyed the following note: "This Steward for purchases on public Acct. had remitted to him by the Come. 3733 30/90. See p. 137." It was actually Stephen Stewart who received this sum from the committee. See Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings, May 31, 1777. For more details about the remittance made to David Stewart, see Robert Morris to John Hancock, January 6, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> At this point the copyist noted "here Mr. Morris's writing ends."

<sup>4</sup> Extracts of affidavits made by Robert Morris in 1785 and by Blair McClenachan in 1786 concerning the Secret Committee's December 1776 agreement with McClenachan for the charter of the *Hancock and Adams*, extracts of documents pertaining to the British capture of this ship in January 1778 during its return voyage from France, and a copy of McClenachan's 1786 account with Congress for this ship are in the Lee Family Papers, MH-H.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 7. 1777

I am returned in tolerable Health to this Town—have received but one Letter from you since I left you, that which you sent by Mr. Rice.

If you send Letters to Coll. Warren, or your Unkle Smith, they will be conveyed, with safety. I hope the Post Office will be upon a better footing soon.

An Army is gathering in the Jerseys. They have frequent Skirmishes, and the Enemy generally come off second best. Whether We shall stay long here is uncertain. If We remove it will not be far.

This will go by Dr. Jackson one of the Managers of the Lottery. I hope it will find you all well.

I conjecture you have cold Weather and snow enough. We had at Baltimore last Saturday and Sunday a deep Snow and very sharp frost, such as froze over the Susquehannah, and obliged Us to ride up 15 miles, to cross the River at Bald fryars. We found a deep snow all the Way to this Place.

Maryland and Pensilvania, have at last compleated their Governments. Mr. Johnson is Governor of the first and Thomas Wharton Jur. of the other.



The Delaware State too have finished theirs. McInlay is Governor.<sup>1</sup> They have also chosen new Delegates to Congress. So have S. Carolina—so has Pensilvania. So has Maryland.

There is indeed every where a more chearfull Face upon Things than there was.

South Carolina is said to have a great Trade and a plenty of Things. Salt comes in frequently and there is a Prospect of supply, though dear.

Our national Revenue is now the most delicate and important Object We have to regulate. If this could be put upon a proper footing, We should be happy.

Money comes in fast upon Loan, which is one great Step—but We must take others.

I sent you from Baltimore, by Captn. Harden, to the Care of your Unkle a Barrell of Burr flour. I hope it will not be taken, but you know I am not lucky in trade.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:168–69.

<sup>1</sup> John McKinly (1721–96), Wilmington physician, was elected president of Delaware by joint ballot of the council and assembly on February 12, 1777. *Minutes of the Council of the Delaware State, from 1776 to 1792* (Wilmington: Historical Society of Delaware, 1887), pp. 67–68.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 7. 1777

The President who is just arrived from Baltimore, came in a few Minutes ago and delivered me, yours of Feb. 8, which he found at Susquehannah River, on its way to Baltimore.

It gives me great Pleasure to find that you have received so many Letters from me, altho I knew they contained nothing of importance. I feel a Restraint in Writing like that which you complain of, and am determined to go on trifling. However, the Post now comes regularly, and I believe you may trust it.

I am anxious and impatient to hear of the March of the Massachusetts Soldiers for the new Army. They are much wanted.

This City is a dull Place, in Comparason of what it was. More than one half the Inhabitants have removed into the Country, as it was their Wisdom to do—the Remainder are chiefly Quakers as dull as Beetles. From these neither good is to be expected nor Evil to be apprehended. They are a kind of neutral Tribe, or the Race of the insipids.

How may possibly attempt this Town, and a Pack of sordid Scoundrels male and female, seem to have prepared their Minds and Bodies, Houses and Cellars for his Reception: but these are few, and more despicable in Character than Number. America will loose nothing, by

Hows gaining this Town. No such Panick will be spread by it, now as was spread by the Expectation of it in December.

However, if We can get together Twenty thousand Men by the first of April, Mr. How will scarcely cross Delaware River this Year. New Jersey may yet be his Tomb, where he will have a Monument very different from his Brothers in Westminster Abbey.<sup>1</sup>

I am very uneasy that no Attempt is made at Rhode Island. There is but an handfull left there, who might be made an easy Prey. The few invalids who are left there are scattered over the whole Island, which is Eleven Miles in length and three or four wide. Are New England Men such Sons of Sloth and Fear, as to loose this Opportunity?

We may possibly remove again from hence, perhaps to Lancaster or Reading. It is good to change Place—it promotes Health and Spirits. It does good many Ways—it does good to the Place We remove from as well as to that We remove to—and it does good to those who move.

I long to be at Home, at the Opening Spring, but this is not my Felicity. I am tenderly anxious for your Health and for the Welfare of the whole House.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:169–70.

<sup>1</sup> See John Adams to Joseph Palmer, June 20, 1775, note 2.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 7 1777

Yours of Feb. 12 received this day. I have begged a Bundle of Newspapers, to inclose. They contain some Intelligence.

I am pretty well, after all my fatiguing Journeys. The C[ongre]ss are in as good a Temper as ever I knew them—more spirited and determined than ever.

The Southern Battallions are not full. But are in a good Way. Rejoice to learn that Measures are taking to send along the Eastern Quotas.

We are raising a large Body of light Horse—a large Troop of them are this Moment passing the Window. Fine Horses and good Men. The trampling of these Creatures is grand.

Dr. Shippen, whom I just now saw, assures me that he has bought an excellent Assortment of Medicines and has the best Prospect of putting the Hospitals in good order, so that the sick will not suffer this year as they did last.

We have some French Vessells arrived here with Druggs and salt, and other Things.

Let me be remembered by all that I remember. You know who they are.

RC (MHi.) Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:170–71.

## Abraham Clark to James Caldwell

My Dr sir,

Philada Friday Evening March 7th. 1777.

Congress have once more Ventured to this Town, where I shall be glad to hear from you when Opportunity Presents. I have Nothing interesting either to the Public or yourself to Communicate. I was in hopes before this to have been able to inform you Congress had to some purpose considered your extraordinary Services. The Comme. apptd. for that purpose reported a reward for you, not great, but such as would have been useful to you at this Time. Congress allowed your Merit and desert but seemed loath to make a pecuniary reward, and recommitted the report, desiring the Come. to keep it for the Present to see if something worthy for them to give & you to receive would not fall in the way.<sup>1</sup> Some began to think it right to Suffer you to hold the Office of Paymaster to that of Chaplain and they Agreed to raise the Chaplains pay to 40 dollars—but nothing is yet determined. I can assure you of nothing but that you have some hearty friends in Congress, and would have more were you not a Presbyterian Clergyman. If any thing arises I hope it will be Acceptable, but till it does come don't Appropriate it. Nothing is more uncertain than a dependance upon public bodies. They are moved like the wind, but rather more uncertain. I shall watch for a favourable gale.

We have a report Circulating here that the Army is about removing from N. York upon some intelligence from England. I wish it may be true but doubt it. Some think Genl. Howe is yet determined to Visit this City, but I cannot persuade myself he will venture across the Delaware when all the Militia of Pennsa are at home and ready to oppose him, & a troublesom set of People behind them. If the report of the Action in Woodbridge last Sunday week be as reported it is much in our favour, however I flatter myself the Enemy will not tarry much longer in the Jerseys. Forces are Collecting from all parts to disturb their quarters there, tho' I believe they have not a Supply of Provisions to carry them to Europe if they were disposed to go. Our Friend Dr. Witherspoon went this morning to look after the College affairs at Prince Town, as Mr Serjeant is Deceased. I am Dr Sir with great regard Yours &c. Abra. Clark

RC (NNPM). Addressed: "To The Revd. Mr. James Caldwell at head Quarters Morristown."

<sup>1</sup> See Clark to James Caldwell, February 4, 1777, note 2.

## Abraham Clark to Elias Dayton

My Dr Friend

Phila. Friday evening March 7th 1777

I have at length heard from you, your favour of March — reached me this day. Your long Silence I can readily account for when you tell me

Whereas General Washington by his Proclamation of the 25<sup>th</sup> of January last, required all those who have subscribed the Declaration, taken the Oaths of Allegiance to the King of Great Britain, and accepted protection and certificates from Lord or General Howe, or any person acting under their Authority forthwith to repair to head quarters, or to the quarters of the nearest general officers of the Continental Army or Militia until further provision can be made by the civil Authority: And therein grants full liberty to all such as prefer the Interest and Protection of Great Britain to the Freedom and happiness of their Country, forthwith to withdraw themselves and families within the enemy's lines. Which Proclamation may in some particular States interrupt the due course of the Laws made therein for the Trial and punishment of Traitors and other offenders against the peace and liberties of the same; For remedy whereof Resolved that the above mentioned Proclamation shall not in anywise take effect in such manner as to prevent the free exercise of the Laws or Regulations, enacted or provided in any of the United States for the punishment of offenders within the same, or exempt any person from arrests and detention in Civil or Criminal Actions, under colour of the Liberty granted to withdraw themselves and families within the enemy's lines; or in any instance to interfere with or oppose the free exercise of the legislative or Executive powers of any State.



of your Purchass removal &c after the repeated removals of Mrs Dayton. I once thought Mrs Dayton in danger of falling into the Enemy's hands, she seemed determined to brave danger but I find She was also capable of fear, at least in her last remove to Black River. It however gives me great pleasure to hear you found them safe tho' not quite so commodiously Situated as on Golden Hill. You are now so Safely Roosted at such a distance from busy scenes I fear I shall not have the Pleasure of seeing you soon. You tell me of your Loss, but seem to think it a matter I shall not think worthy of Notice. I assure you sir I heartily feel for you & all other Sufferers in our Cause, a *True Patriot* is compassionate and Humane. You think you are the greatest Sufferer in the State. I saw Peter Skenck yesterday who assures me he lost at least £4,000, and many have lost their *all*.

You tell me you might inform me what you have been doing &c but for certain reasons refrain. You have been unfortunate in the Line of Promotion happening from certain Circumstances. Last Summer Several Promotions were made. Mr Maxwell was proposed by the Canada Commissioners as a person deserving of particular Notice. You had been placed in a obscure part of the world and Genl Schuyler had never mentioned you as having done any thing good or bad, he is alway Sparing of Praise. However, tho' I highly esteemed Mr Maxwell I did not think him altogether qualified for a Genl. and proposed you. N. York joined me, but the Delegates of Jersey Divided between you two and thereby neither Obtained it then. Towards fall I was at home Sick when Genl Maxwell was apptd. as I am told, by desire of some Jersey Delegates then present; <sup>1</sup> this apptment gave N Jersey two Generals Ld Stirling having been apptd. before, and this is more than our Quota. You stood in Nomination at the last promotions but we could not with any face insist upon another. I esteem Genl. Maxwell and am rejoiced to hear of his behaving well last Sunday Week at Woodbridge tho' before I find he was not greatly esteemed by a Certain General. You ask my advice with regard to yourself. Your Chance of promotion soon you may judge from what I have above related.<sup>2</sup> I assure you I never was fond of your entering into the Service, I most earnestly wished you employed in the Civil Line. This was prevented long ago by your averseness to it, or your timidity. We really want you more in this way than the Military, but how to effect it I cannot tell; If you should now decline the Service I fear it would place you in an unfavourable Light with the Public, and to remain Idle will neither be profitable to you or the Public, that upon the whole I cannot advise you how to Act. You enquire how Jonathan can get his Commission, this you can Obtain from Genl. Washington, he hath the Commsns. to give out and also the nomination.

I came to Philadela. last Tuesday evening. Congress Adjnd to meet here last Wednesday but a Sufficient Numr. to proceed to business have not yet come in unless they have got here this evening. Our Assembly is Sitting at Haddonfield about 7 Miles from hence. By a Letter recd. this

day from the Speaker I am desired to Attend them a few days and shall go to morrow If I can leave Delegates to represent our state in my absence, otherwise stay till I can, as I am not sure there is any but my self in Town. When I shall have an Oppertunity to visit Eliza. Town I cant say, I have not seen any of my family since Novr. and shall not I believe very soon.

Our Friend Mr Caldwells Services I am particularly Attentive to, but the wheels drag heavy, a Presbyterian Clergyman is not with some a Popular Name, and tho' I have the assurance of Congress in his favour I can promise Nothing but my best endeavours.

You say some of our Eliza Town Gentry want the Genl. to alter his Proclamation. It must render any man Unpopular to Speak in favour of those who joined the Enemy & took Protections, but I think the Genls. Proclamation a Violation of our Civil Rights and Ventured to call it in Question in Congress. My Motion was committed to a Come. who reported favourable of the Procla. but foreseeing their report would be contested they desired that the same might lie for Consideration. That I suppose was with design that it should never be called for, and I suppose never will unless I do it, for it is Notorious the Genl. directly counter Acted a Resolve of Congress of the 9th of March last, Strictly forbidding any officer to impose or require Any Oath of the Inhabitants, and he requires An Oath of Allegiance to the *United States* when such An Oath is absurd before our Confederation takes place, Each state requires An Oath to that Particular State, in many other instances the Proclaa. is exceptionable, and very improper, and I believe was the Production or at least set on foot by some too much in the Genl's. Good Graces. He is too much incumbered to attend to every thing, and tho' I believe him honest, I think him fallible.<sup>3</sup> My Paper suffers me only to Add, that I am with great regard most Affectionately yours &c,

Abra. Clark

RC (MH-H). Addressed: "To Elias Dayton Esquire, Colo. of a Jersey Regiment near Morris Town."

<sup>1</sup> William Maxwell's appointment as brigadier general had been made on October 23, 1776. *JCC*, 6:898.

<sup>2</sup> Dayton did not attain the rank of brigadier general until January 7, 1783. *JCC*, 24:38.

<sup>3</sup> See Clark to John Hart, February 8, 1777, note 1.

## Robert Morris to the Commissioners at Paris

Gentn.

Philada. March 7th. 1777

I have wrote you several letters & sent you dispatches from Congress & Committee of Correspondance by Mr. Reed who will probably be longer in reaching you than this but he goes by a much safer Conveyance as I apprehend.<sup>1</sup> The Congress have adjourned from Baltimore to this place again but I think rather at an improper time as it appears to me that Genl

Howe is now forming another expedition against this place and I shall not think this City safe whilst the principal part of its defence depends on Militia, and altho our New Army has been recruiting a Considerable time yet we do not find them so forward as could be wished. The want of cloathing &c keeps them back a good deal, but we are spurring them on as much as possible. I do most sincerely hope you will negotiate the Loan & send out the Articles Wanted as we might then have leisure to make remittances with greater security than we can if done precipitately. We have bought considerable quantities of produce in various parts & shall export it as fast as the times, Seasons & Enemies Ships will permit. This you may depend on, and the Produce of this Country if it could once be exported freely will soon discharge the Debt it may be necessary to Contract.

The Committee will all be here next Week & write you fully themselves. In the mean time I remain with perfect Esteem & Respect, Gentn, Your Obedt hble servt,

Robt Morris

[P.S.] This goes by Monsr. Coleaux who promises to deliver it & a Packet of News Papers.

RC (PPAmP).

<sup>1</sup> See Morris to William Bingham, February 26, 1777, note 4.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror. No. 3. Philadelphia 7th March 1777

Since My last have receiv'd Yours of 31st Decr. & 22d Jany. to which I shall reply very soon not having time at present, The design of this being to introduce to you Mr. Jackson one of Managers of the states Lottery whose business to the Eastward is to dispose of Tickets in doing which I doubt not you'll render him every service in your Power.<sup>1</sup>

Congress adjourn'd from Baltimore the 28th Ulto & I arriv'd here Yesterday & hope tomorrow there will be members enough to make a house. I must refer you to Mr Jackson for news not having time to give you a long letter even if I had any thing material to write but hope shall soon be able to give you something very interesting. The speach of the Gov. of New Jersey will I dare say please you. It is with that design I inclose it. I am Your very affecte Frd,

Wm. Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> This day Whipple also wrote a letter of introduction for David Jackson to John Langdon, in which he reported: "Since my last I have rec'd your favor of the 15th January and a duplicate of 21st to which I have not time at this time to reply particularly but think they have been principally answered in some of my former letters." Whipple also added in a postscript: "You don't mention in any of your letters Capt Smith's receipt or Col. Thornton's order. I shall be glad to know if they are come to hand. By my next I shall send you another order on Col Weare for 400 dollars." Peter Force Collection, DLC.

## Marine Committee to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety

Gentlemen,

Marine office, March 8, 1777.

As the sloop Independence is now ready to sail and we find it impossible to get a Surgeon for her, I must request the Favour that the Bearer hereof Mr. Wm. Russell may have a discharge from your service to act in that capacity on board her. If this can be done with propriety it will serve the public and oblige, Gentlemen, Your most Obedt Servt.

Robt. Morris.

MS not found; reprinted from *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:255.

## Lewis Morris to John Jay

Dear Sir

Phia March 8th 1777

A Mr Jackson that will hand you this goes to our state in order to fix on some person or persons to make sale of the States Lottery Tickets. I have wrote to Govr on the Subject,<sup>1</sup> but least he should not be there, I have Troubled you with this. The Congress meets to day for the first time since their flight. I wish to God we had more men in Jersey, you may be assured from the best authority Howe has not more than Seven Thousand Eight hundred Sick and well, shamefull to the Continent that they do not drive him out; however let us hope for the best. They go on very Sloly with recruiting in this State. The man waits for this, I mean Jacksons servant, so must conclude with mine and the family's best regards to Mrs Jay and believe me Dr Sir Yours Most Sincerely,

Lewis Morris

RC (NNC). Addressed: "John Jay Esqr, In Convention at Esopus."

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## John Adams to Nathanael Greene

Dear sir.

Philadelphia March 9. 1777

I had last Evening the Pleasure of yours of March 3 by your Brother.<sup>1</sup> to whom in his Business to this Place I shall give all the assistance in my Power. In whose favour the Ballance of Letters lies, I cant Say; but if I am in debt, in Point of Numbers it must be because Some of my Remittances have miscarried.

I am not yet entirely convinced, that We are playing a desperate Game, tho I must confess that my feelings are somewhat less Sanguine



than they were last June. This diminution of Confidence is owing to Disappointment. I then expected that the Enemy would have Seen two or three Bunker Hills, between the Point of Long Island and the Banks of the Delaware River—two or three such Actions would have answered my Purpose, perhaps one alone.

I have derived Consolation however, from those Disappointments, because the People have discovered a Patience under them, greater than might have been expected. It was not very Surprising to me that our Troops Should fly in certain Situations, and abandon Lines of Such extent, at the Sudden appearance of a formidable Enemy in unexpected Places because I had learn'd from Marshall Saxe, and from others that Such Behaviour was not only common but almost constant among the best regular Troops. But there was Reason to apprehend, that the People would be Seized with such a Panick upon such a Series of ill success, that in the fright and Confusion whole States would have revolted, instead of a few paltry Individuals, whereas every State has stood firm, and even the most confused and wavering of them have gained Strength and improved in order, under all this Adversity. I therefore do not yet despair.

You Say you “are Sensible I have not the most exalted opinion of our Generals.” From this Expression I Suspect, that Some busy Body has been endeavouring to do Mischief by Misrepresentation. Be this as it may, I am generally so well Satisfied in my own opinions, as to avow them.

I dont expect to see Characters either among the Statesmen or the soldiers of a young and tender State like ours equal to Some, who were bred to the Contemplation of great objects from their Childhood in older, and more powerfull Nations. Our Education, our Travel, our Experience has not been equal to the Production of such Characters, whatever our Genius may be which I have no Reason to Suspect to be less than that of any Nation under the sun.

I dont expect to see an Epaminondas to be sure, because in the opinion of Dr Swift all the ages of the World have produced but six such Characters, which makes the Chances much against our seeing any such. When such shall appear I shall certainly have an exalted opinion.

Notwithstanding this I have a sincere Esteem of our General officers taken together as a Body, and believe them upon the whole the best Men for the Purpose that America affords. I think them Gentlemen of as good sense, Education, Morals, Taste and Spirit as any we can find, and if this opinion of them is not exalted enough I am sorry for it but cannot help it. I hope however that my opinion as well as that of the World in general will be somewhat more sublimated before next winter. I do assure you that two or three Bunker Hill Battles, altho, might be as unsuccessfull as that was would do it. I lament the Inexperience of all of them and I am sure they have all Reason to lament

mine, but not to disguise my sentiments at all, there are some of them, particularly from New England that I begin to think quite unequal to the high Command they hold.

It is very true that Success generally marks the man of Wisdom, and in Some Instances Injustice is done to unsuccessfull Merit: But still it is generally true that success is a Mark of Wisdom and that Misfortunes are owing to Misconduct. The sense of Mankind has uniformly Supported this opinion and therefore I cannot but think it just. The Same Sense has uniformly attributed the ill Success of Armies to the Incapacity or other Imperfections of the General officers, a Truth which I have Sometimes presumed to Hint to some of our General officers with whom I could make so free. There Seems to be Justice in this because the Glory of Successfull wars is so uniformly attributed to them.

I shall join with you, very chearfully, in burying past Errors, and in wishing to concoct and execute the most effectual Measures to free America from her cruel oppressors.

You ask why G. Lee is denyed his Request?<sup>2</sup> You ask, can any Injury arise? Will it reflect any Dishonour upon Congress. I don't know that it would reflect any dishonour, nor was it refused upon that Principle. But Congress was of opinion that great Injuries would arise. It would take up too much Time to recapitulate all the Arguments which were used upon occasion of his Letter. But Congress was never more unanimous, than upon that Question. Nobody I believe would have objected against a Conference, concerning his private affairs or his particular case. But it was conceivable that a Conference should be necessary upon Such Subjects. Any Thing relative to those might have been conveyed by Letter. But it appears to be an artfull Stratagem of the two gratefull Brothers to hold up to the public View the Phantom of a Negotiation, in order to give Spirit and Courage to the Torries, to distract and divide the Whiggs, at a critical Moment when the Utmost Exertions are necessary to draw together an Army. The Words of the Count La Tour,<sup>3</sup> upon a similar occasion, ought to be adopted by Us. "Remember that now there is room neither for Repentence, nor for Pardon. We must no longer reason nor deliberate. We only want Concord and Steadiness. The Lot is cast. If we prove victorious, We shall be a just, free and Sovereign People; if We are conquered, we shall be Traitors, perjured Persons and Rebels."

"The Princes of the Union were not diligent enough in preparing for war. They Suffered themselves to be amused with Proposals of accommodation, they gave the League time to bring together great Forces, and after that, they could no longer brave it. They committed the fault which is very common in civil wars viz that People endeavour to save appearances. If a Party would save appearances, they must lie quiet, but if they will not lie quiet, they must push Things to an Extremity; without keeping any Measures. It rarely happens, but that otherwise they are at once both criminal and unfortunate." Bailes Life of Gustavus Adolphus.<sup>4</sup>

But further. We see what use G[eorge III] and the two Houses make of the former Conferences with Lord How. What a Storm in England they are endeavoring to raise against us from that Circumstance.

But another Thing. We have undoubted Intelligence from Europe, that the Embassadors and other Instruments of the B. Ministry at foreign Courts made the worst Use of the former Conference. That Conference did Us a great and essential Injury at the French Court you may depend upon it. Ld. How knows it—and wishes to repeat it.

They meant farther to answer opposition in England, and to amuse foreign Nations by this Maneuvre, as well as the Whiggs in America, and I confess it is not without Indignation, that I See Such a Man as Lee suffer himself to be duped by their Policy so far as to become the Instrument of it, as Sullivan was upon a previous occasion.

Congress is under no concern about any Use that the disaffected can make of this Refusal. They would have made the worse use of a Conference. As to any Terms of Peace, look into the Speech to both Houses, the answers of both Houses, look into the Proclamations. It is endless to enumerate Particulars which prove that the Howes have no Power but to murder or disgrace Us.

The Retaliation that is to be practiced on Lees account was determined on when I was absent, so that I can give no account of the Reasons for that Measure. Yet I have no doubt of the Right. And as to the disagreeable Consequences you mention, these I hope and presume will not take Place. If they do, they will be wholly chargeable on the Enemy. The End of Retaliation is to prevent a Repetition of the Injury. A Threat of Retaliation is to prevent an Injury, and it seldom fails of its design. In Lees Case, I am confident, it will secure him good Treatment, if Lees Confinement is not strict, that of Campbell and the Hessians ought not to be. The Intention was that they should be treated exactly as Lee is.

Our late Promotions may possibly give Disgust. But that cannot be avoided. This delicate Point of Honour, which is really one of the most putrid Corruptions of absolute Monarchy, I mean the Honour of maintaining a Rank Superiour to abler Men, I mean the Honour of preserving a single Step of Promotion to the service of the Public, must be bridled. It is incompatible with republican Principles. I hope for my own Part that Congress will elect annually all the general officers. If in Consequence of this some great Men should be obliged at the years End to go home and serve their Country in some other Capacity, not less necessary and better adapted to their Genius, *I dont think the public would be ruined*, perhaps it would be no Harm.

The officers of the Army, ought to consider that the Rank, the Dignity, and the Rights of whole States, are of more Importance, than this point of Honour, more indeed than the Solid Glory of any particular officer. The States insist with great Justice and Sound Policy, on having a Share of the General officers, in some Proportion to the Quotas of Troops they are to raise. This Principle has occasioned many of our late Promotions,



and it ought to Satisfy Gentlemen. But if it does not they as well as the Public must abide the Consequences of their Discontent. I shall at all Times think myself happy to hear from you, my dear sir, and to give the Utmost Attention to whatever you may suggest. I hope I shall not often trouble you to read so long a Lurry of small Talk.

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> General Greene's March 3 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> In a February 10 letter, Charles Lee had asked Congress to send a committee to New York to receive a message from the Howe brothers. See Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, February 21, 1777; and *JCC*, 7:140-41.

<sup>3</sup> Count LaTour commanded the Bohemian army of the Union of Princes that unsuccessfully besieged Vienna in 1619.

<sup>4</sup> The second paragraph Adams quoted is from Pierre Bayle's "An Historical Discourse On The Life of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden," in Pierre Bayle, *The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Peter Bayle, The Second Edition . . .*, 5 vols. (London: Printed for D. Midwinter, etc., 1734-38), 5:676.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

No. 4

Philadelphia 9th March 1777

My last was by one of the Managers of the Lottery who its probable will be detain'd some time on the Road, by his Business.

The last letter I receiv'd from you was under the 22 Jany in which you mention the Conduct of a certain *Friend* of ours, which I must confess woud surprise me, had I not been previously acquainted with his disposition. I much approve of Your sentiments respecting Sinecures; as I have ever look'd on them plants of venality so I shall ever use my utmost endeavors to prevent their taking root. I shall write that Gentn my mind on this subject. You mention Masts, I make no doubt that will be a very considerable article of export both to France & Spain. I wish to be inform'd of the price they were formerly procur'd at, and what the contractors were allowed & everything respecting them as perticular as possible. In geting this information you must be very cautious not to raise a Suspicion in those you inquire of that you have any thing lucrative in view, least they counteract my schemes. I also wish you woud make inquiry what Cargos can be procur'd for Europe, whether oil, Pot, or pearl ashes or any quantities of furr is to be had and at what price. As for Lumber the value is so trifling that no price abroad will support the expence of sending it to market, unless some articles of more value can be procur'd to make the most considerable part of the Cargo.

You mention your design to order a few Barrells flour in one of the vessels to be sent to Baltimore. I hardly think it worth your while to run the risque with a view to make a profit by it as it will cost at least 3 dollars besides the Charges. I have never yet heard who is appointed to manage the Loan office in New Hampshire nor what probability there is of pro-



curing money in that way, for the States. I suppose some will come in as the Interest is rais'd to 6 per Cent. I wish to be informed as often as possible what success the office meets with, also what probability there is of raising money by Tax, every measure ought to be taken by the several states to prevent depreciation. I arriv'd here the 6th inst & expect there will be members enough in town today to make a house. We have many reports of Genl. Howes preparing for some movements. It seems he has collected the Greatest part of his Strength at Brunswick. Some say he intends to visit this City. If that shod be the case, I see no great difficulty in his geting here, but if he does, he is unavoidably Ruined. I have therefore too good an opinion of his Generalship to suppose he will attempt so Hazardous an enterprise.

The inclosed letter I began at Bal[t]imore as youll see but did not recollect it till I had wrote this and as there is some thots in it not express in this I inclose unfinish'd as it is to save time,<sup>1</sup> for I assure you I have very little to spare, tho' that need not discourage you from writing for I can always find time to read Letters. I shod be exceeding glad to know all the proceedings of your Legislative body & hope some decisive measures will be adopted by them to free the Country of its Enemies. Your affecte Bror.

W Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> Probably Whipple's incomplete letter to Joseph of February 28, 1777. Whipple designated both this letter and one of March 7 to Joseph "No. 3."

## Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams

My dear Betsy

Philadelphia March 10th 1776 [*i.e.* 1777]

I arrivd in this City from Baltimore last Saturday. Having been indisposd there so as to be obligd to keep my Chamber ten days, I was unable to travel with my Friends, but through the Goodness of God I have got rid of my Disorder and am in good Health. Mrs Ross, at whose House I took Lodging in Baltimore treated me with great Civility and Kindness and was particularly attentive to me in my Sickness, and Wadsworth is as clever a young Man as I ever met with. Tell Mr Collson, if you see him, he more than answers my Expectation even from the good Character he gave me of him.

I hope, my dear, that you and my Family enjoy a good Share of Health. It is my constant & ardent Prayer that the best of Heavens Blessings may rest on you and on them. I lately receivd a Letter from my Son, and since I came to this Place, General Morris of New York tells me he frequently saw him at Peek Kill, and that he behavd well. Nothing gives me greater Satisfaction than to hear that he supports a good Reputation. I hope my Friends do not flatter me.

I am greatly disappointed in not receiving your last Letter. It was owing to the Friendship of Mr Hancock who took it up in this place, and not expecting my Return from Baltimore so soon, he forwarded it by a careful hand who promised him to deliver it to me there. I shall receive it in a day or two by the Post. Pray write to me by every opportunity and believe me to be, your affectionate  
S.A.

P.S. Just as I was going to close this Letter I received from Baltimore your kind Letter of the 26th of January. The Post being now ready to set off I have only time to acknowledge the favor.  
S A

March 12th

RC (NN).

## John Hancock to Dorothy Hancock

My Dear Dear Dolly:

Philadelphia 10th March 1777

My detention at the Ferry & the badness of the Roads prevented my arriving here untill Friday Evening.

I put my things into Mr. Williams' house, and went in pursuit of Lodgings. Neither Mrs. Yard nor Lucy could accommodate me. I then went to Smith's and borrowed two Blankets & returned to my own house; soon after which Mrs. Smith sent me up a very handsome supper, with a Table cloth, Knives & forks, plates, salt, a print of Butter, Tea, double refined Sugar, a Bowl of Cream, a Loaf of Bread &c &c. Here I have remain'd and shall do so waiting your arrival. Indeed Mrs. Smith oblig'd me much. I however lead a doleful lonesome life. Tho on Saturday I dined at Dr. Shippins'. He desires his Regds.; he is as lonesome as I. On Saturday I sat down to dinner at the little table with Folger on a piece of Roast Beef with Potatoes. We drank your health with all our Baltimore friends. Last night Miss Lucy came to see me, & this morning while I was at Breakfast on Tea with a pewter tea-spoon, Mrs. Hard [Yard] came in. She could not stay to Breakfast with me. I spend my evenings at home, snuff my candles with a pair of scissors, which Lucy seeing, sent me a pair of snuffers & dipping gravy out of the Dish with my pewter tea spoon, she sent me a large silver spoon and two silver tea spoons—that I am now quite rich.

I shall make out as well as I can, but I assure you, my Dear Soul I long to have you here & I know you will be as expeditious as you can. When I part from you again it must be a very extraordinary occasion. I have sent everywhere to get a gold or silver rattle for the child with a coral to send but cannot get one. I will have one if possible on yr coming. I have sent a sash for her & two little papers of pins for you. If you do not want them you can give them away.

However unsettled things may be I could not help sending for you as I cannot live in this way. We have an abundance of lies. The current report is that General Howe is bent on coming here, another report is that the Mercht's at New York are packing their goods & putting them on board ships & that the troops are going away, neither of which do I believe. We must, however, take our chances, this you may depend on, that you will be ever the object of my utmost care & attention.

I have been exceedingly busy, since I have been here, tho' have not yet made a Congress, are waiting for the South Carolina gentleman.<sup>1</sup> If Capt. Hammond is arrived with any things from Boston, You will have them put in the Waggon and brought here. If she should not be arriv'd leave the Receipt with Mr. S. Purviance & desire him to receive the things and send them to me. The inclosed Letter give to Mr. Newhouse, one of the Waggoners, Send for him & let him know when you will be ready. I hope you will be able to pack up all your things quickly & have them on the way & that you will soon follow, be careful in packing and do not leave anything behind. Let Harry see that everything is safely stored in the waggons. I send Mr. McCloskey, he will be very useful. I am confident Mr. & Mrs. Hilligas will assist you, pray my best Regds. to them. I have not had time to go to their house but intend it today & shall write Mr. Hilligas by the Post. Young Mr. Hillagas got here on Saturday, he is well, he delivered me your letter & one from his father. I was exceeding glad to hear from you and hope soon to receive another Letter. I know you will set off as soon as You can. Endeavor to make good stages. You may easily lodge at Mr. Steles' at Bush the first night. It is a good house. However I must leave those matters to you as the Road must in great measure determine your Stages. I do not imagine there is any danger of small-pox on the Road. Wilmington is the most dangerous, but go on to Chester. I want to get somebody cleaver to accompany you. I hope to send one to you, but if I should not be able, you must make out as well as you can.

11 March.

I will write by the Post tomorrow. I can't add as I am now call'd on. I hope no accident will happen. Inclosed you have a few memo. as to pack'g &c which I submit to your perusal.

My best regds to Mr & Mrs. Purviance, Capt Nicholson & Lady, Mr. Luce & family & indeed all friends. My love to Miss Katy, and tell her to Ransack the house & leave nothing behind. The Waggoners will attend you at all times. Remember me to all the family. May every blessing of an Indulgent providence attend you. I most sincerely wish you a good journey & hope I shall soon, very soon, have the happiness of seeing you. With the utmost affection and Love, My Dear Dolly, I am yours forever  
John Hancock.

[P.S.] Doctor Bond call'd on me, Desir'd his complements. He will inoculate the child as soon as it comes.

Mrs. Washington got here on Saturday. I went to see her. She told me she Drank tea with you.

Let Harry take the Continental Horse, Saddle & Bridle, that I left at Mr. Purviance's & tell Mr. Purviance to charge his keeping in his public credit. If Capt Hardy returns the Horse I lent him with the Saddle & Bridle he must also come. Get the heavy waggon off as soon as you can, that they may be here as early as possible as we shall much want the things after you get here. I have got your bundle safe with the Petticoat, Table Cloth, I have not sent it as I thought you would not want it.

MS not found; reprinted from Lorenzo Sears, *John Hancock, The Picturesque Patriot* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1912), pp. 215-18.

<sup>1</sup> A reference to one of the South Carolina delegates, Thomas Heyward, Jr., or Arthur Middleton, although Hancock may have meant to refer to both "gentlemen."

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 10th March 1777

Enclosed is an Order on Col Weare for three hundred and thirty dollars, which sum I supplied Col Thornton with, which you'll credit me with for on account of the Marine Committee. Sent you a similar order some time ago, also a receipt of Capt Smith's which you have not mentioned the receipt. I wish to know whether they came safe to hand.<sup>1</sup>

The removal of Congress from this place and the marching of the Militia puts matters here in such a confused situation that I have not been able to procure the dimensions for the 74 gun ship but expect to forward them next post. Chesapeake Bay is now entirely clear of the enemy so that if any of the vessels directed to be sent there should arrive about this time they will be safe.

I am in very great haste, your affectionate friend &c,

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> On this point, see also William Whipple to Joseph Whipple, March 7, 1777, note.

## John Adams to William Tudor

Dear Sir

Philadelphia March 11, 1777

Yours of the 7th instant, I just recd.<sup>1</sup> Am glad to find the Post begins to do its Duty, and that Intelligence is like to be more regular.

I doubt whether the Enemy have at Amboy and Brunswick so many as near 10,000 Men. But are they not posted in Smaller Numbers at other



Places? Cannot these Places be attacked or Surprised? We must continually harrass them. As to their marching to Philadelphia, this is in an high degree improbable. If they leave Garrisons in Amboy and Brunswick, they will not have Numbers. If they evacuate those Places, Troops are coming from all Quarters. They will not attempt Philadelphia, without a large Army by Land, and a formidable Fleet in the River. They must wait for Reinforcements for this.

I assure you, We have never had a Return, since I have been last in Congress. It grieves me to hear you Still complain of the Want of Discipline. It is surely high Time to learn Wisdom. Are the officers dead to all Sense of Duty, and common Prudence? Every officer ought to be hanged, who does not discipline his Men every day.

A great General will order officers the best Skilled in military Discipline, to make his Troops perform their Exercises regularly, to make them encamp and decamp and in general to keep them inured to all the military Functions. He will frequently be present at all these Exercises, and will establish good order every where to which his Presence will contribute as much as his Capacity.

I have learned from Marshall Saxe, and universal History, as well as the fatal Experience of the last Campaign a great deal of Contempt for Forts, and much more for long Lines. Heaven grant We may not again depend upon Such Reeds. Is it not criminal to hint at any fault at Fort Washington? I am as little pleased with the commanding officer at that Fort, as I am with the Generalship that lost it, with 2600 Men in it. Why was not a General officer in it? Why was it not defended like Bunker Hill? Do officers think that these Things are to be forgotten? Or that Vengeance will always sleep? As to the two officers you mention, I wish they were converted into Select Men. Yet there is no very conspicuous Difference between them, and many others that my opticks can discern.

You promised me to keep a Journal, and send it me. It would give me great Pleasure, and much Information which I want. We have made Lincoln a Major General. I wish to know how it is liked and how he behaves. I wish We had better Materials than We have, but We must use the best We can get.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

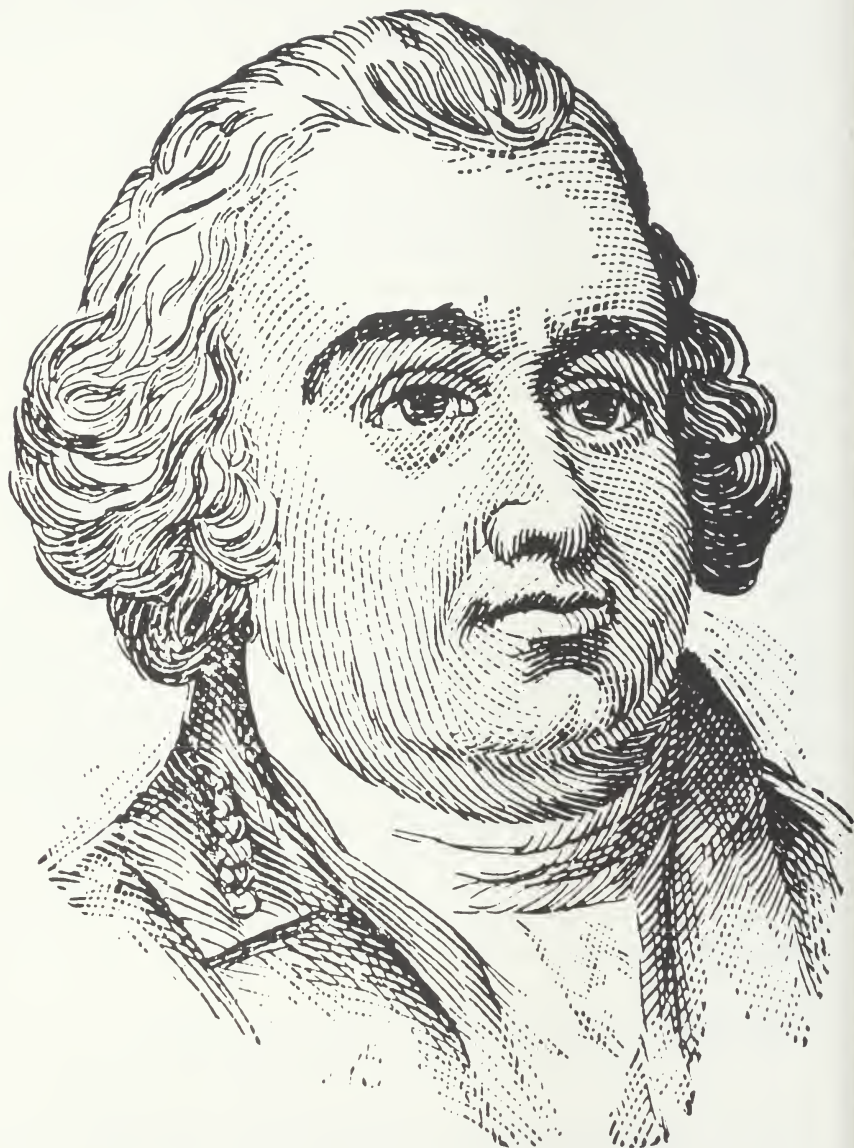
<sup>1</sup> Tudor's March 7 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Philadelphia March 11th 1777

Our adjournment from Baltimore has put all our proceedings to a stand, & our unsettled situation has prevented my writing to you as often as I



Thomas Burke

at first intended. I believe you have no cause to regret it, for I have had nothing to communicate worth your attention.

The more experience I acquire, the stronger is my conviction, that *unlimited power can not be safely trusted to any man, or set of men, on earth*. No men have undertaken to exercise authority with intentions more generous & disinterested than the Congress, & none seem to have fewer or more feeble motives for increasing the power of their body politic. What could induce individuals, blest with peaceable domestic affluence, to forego all the enjoyments of a pleasing home, to neglect their private affairs, & at the expence of all their time & some part of their private fortunes, to attend public business under many insurmountable difficulties & inconveniences? What but a generous zeal for the public? And what can induce such men to endeavour at increasing the power with which they are invested, when their tenure of it must be exceedingly dangerous & precarious, & can bring them individually neither pleasure nor profit? This is a question I believe can not be answered, but by a plain declaration, that Power of all Kinds has an irresistible propensity to increase a desire for itself. It gives the passion of ambition a velocity which increases on its progress; & this is a passion which grows in proportion as it is gratified. I hope Sir, you will pardon me these reflections. I know they have not escaped you. But I find my attendance in Congress, short as it has been obtrudes them on me every day. Great part of our time is consumed in debates, whose object on one side is to increase the power of Congress, & on the other to restrain it. The advocates do not always keep the same side of the contest. The same persons, who, on one day, endeavour to carry through some resolutions, whose tendency is to increase the power of Congress, are often on another day very strenuous advocates to restrain it. From this I infer that no one has entertained a concerted design to increase the power; the attempts to do it proceed from ignorance of what such a being ought to be, & from the delusive intoxication which power naturally imposes on the human mind. This latter inevitably leads to an abuse & corruption of power, & is in my humble opinion the proper object of political vigilance & jealousy. This is what will insensibly produce combinations of the States, & such combinations will be fatal to the liberties of many. It is of little moment to know what are now the subjects of political speculation. No State is in a condition to cherish projects of future ambition; but situation & comparative strength will always suggest such projects, & the powerful & conveniently situated will cherish them when they can. This will always be the case so long as man remains what his nature has determined him to be. Nor will human virtue be a sufficient security against it; on the contrary I am very suspicious that our greatest danger will arise from that source. The present is the period of public virtue & spirit: it is also the Era of inexperience. Simple nature walks almost without disguise. That profound dissimulation covered by an appearance of the most unreserved frankness, always inseparable from the



accomplished political negotiator, is unknown amongst us, & must long be unknown, because it is to be acquired only by the most assiduous application, & long attentive exercise in the habit of it. Courts are the only schools where it can be learned, & we yet have them not, & probably shall not have them very soon. Every man's soul now stands forth; & in every one you read in very legible characters, that the State he represents is more wise, virtuous, or powerful than any other, & therefore ought to dictate to the rest. Where the more palpable advantage of power is wanting, each, in his own imagination supplies the superiority in wisdom or virtue; & this, I believe, in time will be realised. For conscious strength begets a security which relaxes the more painful efforts of wisdom & virtue; while conscious weakness spurs them to their highest mettle. But, strength, Sir, irresistible strength must in the end overcome all opposition. The more powerful States by combining, can doubtless subjugate the more feeble, & opposition will but rouse them to more effectual efforts. I own, Sir, I am under no apprehensions from the New England States. Their situation & natural disadvantages will prevent their becoming formidable if uncombined with others. Their situation is remote, & in a manner detached from the other States, especially ours to the Southward, & nature has in general denied them a fertile soil. Their principal resources will always be in commerce & fisheries. This indeed will give them ships & seamen; but they can not support the one, or fit out the others, without the assistance of other States, & other States can not be excluded from fishing & navigation. Their strength may indeed be competent to internal defence, but, I believe, not to foreign conquests. I think the most formidable combination would be Massachusetts, Pennsylvania & Virginia. The first has power sufficient to overawe & consequently to direct the other three New England States. The second could equally influence Jersey & Delaware. Virginia would be formidable to her Southern neighbours, & Maryland. New York could not resist a combination of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts; Maryland must fall a sacrifice to Pennsylvania & Virginia. Against this powerful confederacy, I fear, we should not be able to hold out long; & yet North Carolina seems to me best calculated to check the ambition of Virginia. I can not help, Sir, apprehending that any resolution of Congress, wherein the three formidable above mentioned States concur, must be carried into effect, even if it tended to annihilate the Independence of other States, & divided their Territory. I have said that virtue would increase or give birth to this danger. Thus I explain myself. The virtue most cultivated will be that which will most distinguish a man in the State in which he resides. The grandeur & preeminence of that State will be the favourite passion of every man in it. A zealous love for that grandeur & preeminence, & a capacity to promote it, will be what must best distinguish & recommend any individual in it. In a word, patriotism in America must always be partial to the particular States. Patriotism to the whole will never be cherished or regarded, but as it may be con-



ducive or necessary to the other. The first will be the passion of the heart: the second the idea of the understanding, & whenever our common danger is at any time removed, or even relaxed, the latter will lie dormant, while the active principle of the first will exert its greatest energy. No man can rise to eminence or distinction but through the favor of his particular State; because he must be obscure until that points him out: & no man can acquire that favor by any other means than convincing them that their wishes will always be the first object of his attention,<sup>1</sup> not to mention that natural prejudice which every man living has in favour of his own country, & the community of which he is a member, & which the most attentive & liberal education is not able wholly to remove. In this particular all men are & ever will be national.

These & many other considerations make me earnestly wish that the power of Congress was accurately defined, & that there were adequate checks provided to prevent any excess. I am also exceedingly desirous to have particular instructions relative to some heads which I shall enclose to you, to be laid before the Assembly. One thing now embarrasses me very much. It is this. Whenever any matter wherein the authority<sup>2</sup> of Congress is contested is debated, it is usual to lay it over undetermined. By the rule of secrecy you know I am not at liberty to communicate any thing before it is determined, & therefore can not consult the State upon it. In these cases all our time is lost, for nothing is entered on the Journals, & nothing therefore can give testimony hereafter that such points were contested & even rejected by a majority, as is indeed the usual case.

Relative to the measures intended to be pursued by Congress, I have nothing new to add. They are endeavouring at a foreign alliance, & have some hopes of success: they will increase as much as possible their naval force, & are using every endeavour to recruit a strong army, to take the field early in the spring. Their endeavours in this respect will be ineffectual, if not earnestly seconded by the States. I have no doubt, Sir, of your particular attention to this important object. I am often suggesting to Congress that the Civil Power of the States is the best instrument for calling forth their proportion of exertions in this or any cause: but they hear with reluctance any thing that looks like the interposition of such a power in military affairs, tho' no one will venture directly to oppose or reject it. I need not repeat to you my own thoughts on this subject: you have often heard me deliver them, & I have not yet changed my opinion.

With respect to intelligence, I will enclose you the papers, & any thing not contained in them I will subjoin.

I inclose you an abstract of the debates in Congress on every question of any consequence that has been determined in Congress since my last. By these you will see what has been decided, & why. You will from them also better judge of the various opinions, or rather the fluctuations of opinion in Congress. This is an evil from which nothing but experience, & a better constitution of Congress can deliver us. My own opinions, being

those in which my country is particularly interested, I wish her to be fully informed of. To you, Sir, her principal guardian, I shall submit them with all the simplicity of unadorned truth; & where they are reprehensible I wish them to be reproved.<sup>3</sup> The last matter in the abstract will show you, that even thus early men so eminent as members of Congress are willing to explain away any power, that stands in the way of their particular purposes.<sup>4</sup> What may we not expect some time hence, when the seat of power shall become firm by habit, & men will be accustomed to obedience, & perhaps forgetful of the original principles which gave rise to it. I believe, Sir, the root of the evil is deep in human nature: its growth may be kept down, but it can not be entirely extirpated. Power will one time or other be abused, unless men are well watched, & checked by something which they can not remove, when they please.

This State is very unhappy at present; so powerful a party opposes the new Constitution, that I fear the Magistrate will not be obeyed. I am told Doctor Franklin persuaded them, by a simile, to reject a second branch of the Legislature. He said two branches would resemble a waggon with two horses at the tongue & two at the tail, who by pulling opposite ways would keep the machine still. I think the simile would have been more apt, had it represented four horses yoked to the tongue, whose business it is to assist one another in pulling on the plain, & up hill, & through all difficult places, but in going down hill the two hindmost should oppose the motion of the machine, & prevent its running too fast, to the prejudice of the horses themselves & all concerned. This simile of the Doctor's is said to have kindled the present flame. One can hardly suppress the reflection, that the people who could be so much influenced by it, were wonderfully competent to frame Constitutions!

Our expenses here, Sir, are incredible: every horse is ten shillings a day, & every thing else in proportion.<sup>5</sup>

Tr (Nc-Ar). FC (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> In the FC the preceding part of this sentence reads: "Whoever will Consider that no man can be known all over America until he becomes Eminent in their Councils or Armies, and that he can never get admittance into either in any considerable Rank but through the favor of his particular State, and that he cannot obtain their favor by any other means than Convincing them that their Wishes will always be first Objects of his attention, whoever, I say, Considers this will not dispute the Truth of my Observation." Alongside this passage Burke wrote in the margin: "This thought is expressed in a more Concise manner in the original."

<sup>2</sup> "Jurisdiction and authority" in FC.

<sup>3</sup> Burke added the following clause to this sentence in the FC: "that the public Servants in this Department may better learn their Duty, and that I in particular may be Instructed not to give the Sense of the State in a Manner which She may not approve."

<sup>4</sup> See Burke's Notes of Debates, February 26 and 27, 1777.

<sup>5</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Burke to Caswell, March 19, 1777.

## John Hancock to Dorothy Hancock

My Dearest Dolly: Philadelphia, 11 March 1777 9 o'clock Evening

No Congress today, and I have been busily employ'd as you can conceive; quite lonesome & in a domestick situation that ought to be relieved as speedily as possible, this Relief depends upon you, and the greater Dispatch you make & the Sooner you arrive here, the more speedy will be my relief. I dispatched Harry, McClosky and Dennis this morning with Horses & a Waggon as winged Messengers to bring you along. God grant you a speedy and safe Journey to me. Mr. Pluckrose the Bearer of this going for Mrs. Morris, I have engaged him to proceed on to Baltimore to deliver you this; I wrote you this morning to bring all the things that came from Boston to this place but should they be landed before you leave Baltimore, I could wish you would present One Quintal of the Salt Fish & three or four Loaves of the Sugar to Mr. Sam'l Purviance, or in case they should not be landed, leave directions to have these articles taken out and presented to Mr. P with our Compliments. I forget what other things there are but if you choose to make presents of any of them, I pray you to do it. If in the prosecution of your Journey you can avoid lodging at the head of Elk, I wish you would, it is not so good as the other houses, but this must depend on Circumstances; I wish you to make yr journey as agreeable as possible. Should any Gentlemen & Ladies accompany you out of Town do send McClosky forward to order a handsome Dinner and I beg you to pay every Expence, order McClosky to direct the Landlord not to Receive a single farthing from any one but by your Direction & order a genteel Dinner; plenty—<sup>1</sup>

If Mr. Thomson cannot be ready with his Waggons as soon as you are, do not wait, but part of the Guard with an Officer must attend yours, and part be left to guard his. I only wish to have you here, and if you cannot readily attend to the Return of the things borrowed of Mr. Dugan, leave them in the Care of some trusty person to deliver them and pay him for his trouble. Am I not to have another letter from you? Surely I must. I shall send off Mr. Rush or Tailor to-morrow or next day to meet you. I wish I could do better for you but we must Ruff it; I am so harrassed with applications, & have been sending off Expresses to Call all the Members here, that I have as much as I can Turn my hands to; I don't get down to dinner, Catch a Bit, I write, & then at it again . . .<sup>2</sup> if it promotes the cause I am happy, do beg Mr. Hillegas to send some money by my Waggon, or I shall be worn out with applications, pray him to take pity on me. I have lent my own stock already to stop some mouths.

My respects to Mr. & Mrs. Hillegas, they must excuse my not writing now, I have not seen their son since he deliver'd me your Letter, I asked him to Call, but I suppose he is so engaged with his Connection he has not



had time, I could wish to have it in my Power to do him any Service for the great regard I bear to his worthy Parents, I assure you I really love them, I wish they were Coming with you, I could then have a Family where I could with pleasure go, & ask them a hundred Questions, & take a thousand Liberties with them, that I cannot do in any Family now here, I shall Regret their absence, but I am Determin'd to make a point of having them up, for I cannot attend to the applications that are made to me in consequence of the Treasurer's absence; he must come, He shall come if I have any influence.

Lucy & Nancy call'd on me, I was busy over papers; we drank a glass together to our Baltimore Friends, I waited on them home, & return'd to my Cottage; Jo comes in with a plate of minc'd Veal, that I must stop, I shall take the plate in one hand, the knife in the other, without cloath, or any Comfort, & Eat a little & then to writing, for I have not room on the Table to put a plate, I am up to the eyes in papers. Adieu for the present.

The Inclosed Letter Lucy just sent me for you. Supper is over, no Relish, nor shall I have till I have you here, & I wish Mr. & Mrs. Hilligas to join us at Supper on Tuesday Evening when I shall Expect you. I shall have Fires made & everything ready for your Reception, tho' I dont mean to hurry you beyond measure. Do as you like, don't fatigue yourself in Travelling too fast. I keep Josh on trial, he promises Reformation, he knows fully his fate. My best Regards to Mr. & Mrs. Purviance, to Mr. Lay & Family, Capt Nicholson & wife, Mr. Stewart & wife & all Friends. Tell Mr. Purviance & Capt. Nicholson I shall write them fully in a day or two and Determine all matters to their satisfaction, I am so worried that I cannot even steal time to write them now. Tell Mr. Purviance I Rec'd his Letter by Post and will forward the Letters he Inclosed me to Boston & Newbury to-morrow. Pray let Dr. Wisenhall know that I Rec'd his Letter, & am much obliged for his attention to the Child and that I will do everything in my power for the Gentleman who he mentions in his Letter, you will Recompense him for calling to see the Child.

Remember me to all the Family. If Nancy inclines to come in the Waggon and you like it she may Come, do as you like in every instance, my love to Miss Katy, tell her if anything is left behind, I shall have at her, for she Ransack'd when we left Philadelphia & she must do the same now.

The Opinion of some seem to be that the Troops will leave New York, where bound none yet know; one thing I know that they can't at present come here, perhaps they are going to Boston or up North River. Time will discover. Never fear, we shall get the day finally with the smiles of heaven.

Do Take precious care of our dear little Lydia.

Adieu. I long to see you. Take Care of Yourself. I am, my Dear Girl,  
Yours most affectionately,

John Hancock.



[P.S.] Do let Harry Buy & bring 1 or 2 Bushells of Parsnips. Bring all the wine, none to be got here.<sup>3</sup>

MS not found; reprinted from Lorenzo Sears, *John Hancock, The Picturesque Patriot* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1912), pp. 219–22.

<sup>1</sup> Thus in Sears' text.

<sup>2</sup> At this point, Sears inserted an ellipsis and the editorial notation "the writing is here illegible."

<sup>3</sup> Hancock wrote another letter to Dorothy two days later in which he admonished her to "take care of Genl. Washington's mug. Take care in crossing the ferries. . . . Do not be too venturesome. Had you not better take some bedding in the light wagon as you will be here before the heavy wagons. I dare say you will order everything with the utmost propriety. I commit you and family to the care of a kind Providence and hope you will have a safe and quick journey." *Thomas Madigan Catalog* (November 1928), p. 38, item 102.

## John Hancock to the New York Delegates

In Congress Chamber, *Philadelphia, March 11, 1777.*

*Resolved*, (as the opinion of the representatives of eight of the United States now convened at the State House in Philadelphia,) That the critical state of our affairs requires the immediate meeting of Congress, and that the President be, and he is hereby requested to send a message by express to the Delegates of the Delaware State, and another to the Delegates of the State of New-York, desiring their attendance in Congress, that for want thereof the business of the Continent may no longer be delayed.

Gentlemen, In consequence of the foregoing resolve,<sup>1</sup> I am most earnestly to request you will be pleased to give your attendance in Congress at this place as speedily as possible; our affairs require immediate attention, and it is absolutely necessary there should be a full representation; I therefore hope to have the pleasure of seeing you here immediately. I am much hurried; can only add, that I am, with much esteem, gentlemen, Your most obedt. servt.  
John Hancock, Presidt.

MS not found; reprinted from *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:409.

<sup>1</sup> This resolve does not appear in the journals of Congress. The journals were not maintained daily between Congress' February 27 adjournment in Baltimore and March 12, when a quorum finally was available in Philadelphia. Since Secretary Thomson did not return to Philadelphia and resume keeping the journals until March 24, the entries for March 14–23 were kept by President Hancock and his secretary, Jacob Rush. Although the journal for March 12–13 is in Thomson's hand, he must have made these entries after the fact and on the basis of rough notes kept by Hancock and Rush, since according to his own testimony (in an April 22 letter to Washington) he was not in Philadelphia at this time. Immediately after the entry in the journal for February 27 stating that Congress was adjourning to return to Philadelphia, there is a notation by Hancock listing some orders Congress issued on March 24. Hancock must have entered these orders under the former date because they were issued in response to a report of the Board of Treasury that was delivered during Congress' recess. PCC, item 1, 7:174, 8:1–23.

## Lewis Morris to John Jay

Dear Jay

Phia March 11th 1777

Congress as yet not being able to make a house, is the reason of my not transmitting to you the resolve Relative to Docr Morgan,<sup>1</sup> when it does be assured I shall do it. Mr Holt is come to this Place, and says that he is employed by our State to print, that he has purchased a Quantity of paper to the amount of two hundred pounds, he waited of Mr Robert Morris to advance him the Money. Mr Morris told him if I would become his security for our State he would let him have the Money, and accordingly I Said I would. I hope Holt is Honest, but should he be otherwise, your leting me know by the return of this Express, I shall have time enough to secure myself. Just this moment we have an account the large Powder-house near French Creek in this State is blown up, it is said to be done by some evil minded Persons.<sup>2</sup> The reason that my Son Jacob has not joined his regit. is, that Genl Lee has requested one [of] his Aid de Camp's to come to him, and I heard Jacob was to go. Lewis has refused a Majority in Hazins and Antills regit., Chose rather to remain with Sullivan. I know your goodness will excuse me for troubling you with my Family but I am convinced you Love them. My best regards to Mrs Jay and believe me Dr Sir, Yours Most Sincerely,

Lewis Morris

RC (NNG).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:24; and Morris to Jay, February 15, 1777.<sup>2</sup> For a fuller account of this incident, see *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:255.

## Oliver Wolcott to Joshua Huntington

Sir,

Philadelphia 11t March 1777

Mr. Hancock has delivered me your Letter to him, and desired me to Return an Answer to it, and it might be proper for me to notice to you that the Mode of Application at the Marine Board is thro the Delegate of that State from whence the Application arises. Mr. Perkins came to this City and was here informed of the Adjournment of Congress to it which prevented his going forward. When Congress left Baltimore they directed that a Sum of Money should be bro't forward but it has not yet arrived. That no delay might be suffered in your Business I obtained an order for Thirty Thousand Dollars on this Loan Office but upon Application for the Money, find it intirely Exhausted tho the Payment into it of late have been liberal, and previous orders unanswered will prevent my receiving of it there for some time—but as I think that it will not be many days before the money comes from Baltimore I shall retain Mr Perkins for the present. You may undoubtedly expect that Sum to put forward the Frigates which

you and Mr Cotton have to Build, and such other future advancements as may be necessary.<sup>1</sup>

As to the Draught or Discription of the Frigate which you are to Build, it has of late been neglected to be sent, the Committee have left it, to the Discretion and Emulation of those employed in the several States to Rival each Other in the Perfection of Building. But I shall Endeavour to send (or procure it to be done by the Board of Assistants to the Marine Department who act under the Direction of the Marine Board) such Draughts as may be proper.<sup>2</sup> Wishing of you sir, success and much Honour to yourself in the Conduct of your Business, I am, sir, with Respect, your Most Obedient, humble Servant, Oliver Wolcott

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> In a February 18 letter Governor Trumbull had notified the Marine Committee that Joshua Huntington of Norwich and John Cotton of Middletown had been appointed to superintend the construction of two continental frigates in Connecticut. See *JCC*, 7:58; and Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1228–29.

<sup>2</sup> See Wolcott to Joshua Huntington, March 15, 1777.

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 11t March 1777

My last to you was from Baltimore of the 23d Ultimo,<sup>1</sup> since which Congress have adjourned to this City, from whence I hope Howe will not again attempt to drive them and if he should that he will meet with that Rebuke that his Insolence deserves. We have suffered much for the Want of a Regular Army but I hope that Inconvenience will be soon remedied.

I have recd no Letters from Litchfield since that from Laura of the 16t Janry., but as Dod is expected to Return in a few days, I hope I shall soon hear from you—Which I am Very Solicitous of as by my last Information you was in an ill State of Health. But We must commit the care of our absent Friends to a Merciful Providence and not be Anxious about matters which it is not in our Power to alter. With Gratitude let us enjoy the Blessings of our Maker and with an unruffled mind bear the Hour of adversity. By the Blessing of God I enjoy Health; and I hope that the scene will continue to brigten more and more upon our publick affairs. I intended before now to have given you, as I promised an Acco of my Southern Pilgrimage but must defer it to another Opportunity. As to domestick Affairs can give no other advice, than that I think it would be best to Retain Elisha in the Family but you will and must judge of the expediency of this and every other Domestick concernment.

Every Thing here bears a high price. The avaritious, the Timid and the disaffected have all conspired to produce that Evil. Other Causes

have also Operated to the same End. Whether the Regulation of Price has done at the Eastward I cannot say but I suspect the Effect of that Regulation cannot be Nothing. For if the Price of tea could not be regulated an article the most Obnoxious, I shall much doubt wheither any Other Article can.

My Love to my Children and Freinds, and be assured that I am, most affectionately yours,  
Oliver Wolcott

P.S. This goes by the Post which is Now reestablished to the Eastward—and while it continues so I hope my Friends will more frequently Write to Me. I Would Write Mr Lyman a Letter if I had Time.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## Francis Lewis to the New York Convention

Gentlemen,

Baltimore, 12th March, 1777.

I wrote you the 16th, 31st January, and 18th February, addressed to the President, since which I have been honoured with his of the 13th February,<sup>1</sup> directing several articles to be purchased out of the Montgomery's prizes, for the use of the State, which it was not in my power to execute for the following reasons, vizt. Upon an application of Congress, setting forth that as several hundred recruits for the new battalions were daily coming into this town from the States of Virginia and Maryland, in order to reinforce Genl. Washington's army, and these being destitute of proper clothing, &c. it would be absolutely necessary that the several articles captured by the Montgomery, and suitable for the soldiery, should be applied here; and requested my assent, which I peremptorily refused. The next day it was moved in Congress that an order should issue appointing four persons to appraise all the woollens, linens, &c. suitable for the soldiery, captured by the Montgomery armed vessel. Upon the motion being read, I objected to the proceeding as partial, and gave the following reasons: that as the property was, on condemnation, vested in the State of New York, together with the captain and crew of the Montgomery, and that the latter insisted on having their property disposed of in the customary manner at public vendue; and urged the evil that might attend such a precedent, especially as I had directions from your Convention to purchase those articles, and forward them to you for the clothing your troops, when they (the Congress) well knew, that the State of New York, in its present circumstances, had no port open through which they could introduce any supplies. But, maugre all my objections, the question was put, and carried nemine con. for the motion, and four gentlemen of this town appointed appraisers.<sup>2</sup>



The members of Congress having left this a few days afterwards, by adjournment to Philadelphia, the appraisers when met, declared themselves inadequate to the appointment, being totally unacquainted with the value of those goods; which, together with the captain and crew's opposition to that mode, produced an agreement between the parties, that all should be sold at auction, except the woollens and coarse linens, which the Congress was to take at the rates of a dollar currency for what cost one shilling sterling, for the woollens, and 4s. 6d. per yard for the coarse linens; the rest of the cargo that sold at vendue, I compute upon an average, went off at about one thousand per cent: as a specimen, yard wide Irish linen, that cost 2s. 8d. per yard sterling, sold for 24s. currency per yard; a dollar is 7s. 6d. Cordage sold at £14 5s. per cwt.

I forgot to mention that in answer to my arguments against the motion, Congress availed themselves of a letter from General Washington, advising them that the Convention at Fishkill had there stopped (as I think) thirty-six wagons laden with clothing for the army immediately under his command. He says, "indeed I cannot blame them, knowing their distressed situation." However, of this a handle was made to obviate my objections.<sup>3</sup>

The sale of the schooner's cargo is now completed. In short, such was the exorbitant prices which these goods sold at, that I was deterred from making a considerable purchase. Add to this the difficulty of procuring conveyances, which are all employed in transporting the Congress's stores, the member's baggage, together with that of the new battalions on their march to Head-Quarters, I have only bought a few casks of barley, some coils of cordage, and the four X cut saws, thinking they might be of service with Genl. Schuyler at Albany; and these perhaps I may be obliged to leave behind for the public, for want of conveyance.

The trial of the brigantine laden with salt, is to come on on Tuesday the 18th inst.; I believe she will be acquitted by the Admiralty court, being claimed by an inhabitant of this town; if so, Capt. Rogers intends appealing to Congress, as it appears by the register and papers found on board, that she was owned in Ireland, and bound to N——, which the claimants pretend was only for a cover.

Capt. Rogers has his sloop almost ready for the sea, and intends sailing as soon as the brigantine's trial is over, but informs me that himself and crew are entitled to a moiety of all captures: upon my asking him for his articles, he told me that his agreement was verbal, *i.e.* to be upon the same footing with armed vessels fitted out by the Congress, which were originally one-third for the captors; but that previous to his taking these two last prizes, Congress had extended it to one-half. As this is contrary to the tenor of your last letter, I shall cause the distribution of the prize money to be deferred, until I receive your further instructions on this head.<sup>4</sup>

Our State being still unrepresented in Congress, it was thought necessary I should remain here a few days longer to transact some business in the

marine department. In that time I shall get the sales of the prizes, &c. completed, and set off for Philadelphia; from thence transmit you the accounts. Please to furnish me with your directions in the disposal of nett proceeds; and permit me again to remind you of having our State represented in Congress; it has suffered by the omission.

I am respectfully, gentln., Your very humbl. servt., F. Lewis.

MS not found; reprinted from *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:396-97.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1191.

<sup>2</sup> Congress took this action on February 27. *JCC*, 7:167.

<sup>3</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:63-64.

<sup>4</sup> On April 1 the convention resolved that whereas one-half of the net proceeds from Captain Rogers' prizes should go to him and his crew, the other half should be used by Lewis to purchase salt. *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:859.

## James Lovell to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Sir

Philada. Mar. 12th. 1777

Yours of January 22d did not come to hand till the 26th of February at Baltimore, after our resolve to return to this city. Here I arrived last Wednesday, and omitted writing to you by one opportunity, expecting another of greater dispatch, wherein I have been disappointed. Laugh not at this circumstantial detail. It is produced altogether as an opiate for my own sensibility. For I well recollect how much pleasure the receipt of your kind letter gave me; and I remember it to have been the first enjoyment of the kind which any one had afforded me after I left Boston. And therefore it was that I felt a guilty flutter, upon taking up my pen just now, to do what ought not to have been omitted thus long, without Reason; which I was trying to give *to myself* in the first lines above.

The Business, which deprived me & mine of your good Company in Boston, has robbed me also in Baltimore, at times, of my customary pillow-visitor. But I have such a hope of things being now in a proper train, that sweet Sleep will resume the place which sour Care has occupied for a season. Cannon & amunition are in forwardness for Ticonderoga; and some new levies are actually arrived there. So that, if it is not already invested, we may be well prepared for a spring-attack. The lake was not frozen at our last information; nor did the small pox prevail in the garrison, tho' there was some appearance of that distemper.

The Enemy in the Jerseys have been long liable to be destroyed by any considerable Army of vigor. I am not able from any regular returns to say what *number* we have had; and you are as good a judge as I can be as to spirit.

High expectations have been formed here of good news from Rh. Island, where there can be only a small inimical force. But a letter which I have just recd. from Providence puts an end to those expectations.

It is plain that we must look for another summer's bloody work. And, tho' I cannot say it is absolutely certain that there will be foreign diversions in our favor, yet I think the appearances of such an event are many & encouraging. As to supplies of arms & cloathing—there is no doubt but we shall be well off in a few months, even to a surplus. But, we must set out with what can now be collected by industry in each state of the Union, by purchase or loan or impressment.

It is judged altogether impossible for Howe to move this way by land for want of forrage & horses: The quantity and number of which ought to be accurately ascertained, in secret modes of intelligence by our General.

Confusion to the wretches who broke in upon your intended rural scheme of life! Historians, Poets & Painters unite to direct us from noisy Capitals to country Retirements for the greatest felicity within the allotments of this habitable Planet. I had often formed wishful prospects of spending some future part of my Days as a farmer, before old age should unfit me to set an industrious example in that course of life to my dear Boys. But I was obliged like you to make a proviso for my beloved partner, "if it should be her choice." For, without an union of sentiment in such connexions, no alteration of an habitual course of living could be crowned with felicity. May the Scenes of war, rapine & murder, from which, in generous patriotic resolution, you have scorned to hide yourself, be soon at an end! And may they eventually, in contrast with the future fulfilments of your former rural plan, be productive of a vast encrease of happiness.

In Baltimore I had the satisfaction of dieting in the same family with Coll. Whipple. Here, we have taken lodgings together. This circumstance tends much to alleviate the great vexation which is the product of my mission to this part of the Continent. Our landlord is Mr. Geo. Duncan of Boston. But it is the landlady which determined me in this land of strangers. Tell my Friends and Polly Middleton's Friend that Mrs. Duncan *formerly was* a Ran, the pretty daughter of Parry. The marked words, simple as they appear, caused many a fat laugh for your charming wife some years ago. Though past years and the laughing irritability peculiar to them will not return, yet let us hope together for a lengthy series of more rational pleasures, calm & philosophical in our after course, thro, what the splenetic call, "this Vale of Tears."

The Remnant of this Sheet will suffice to contain in words the Profession of an affectionate regard for you and your dear Hannah, which no extent of seperation from you can alter, and which is really heightened by my misfortune lately threatening to cut me off from all opportunity of asserting myself Your Friend & h. servt,

James Lovell

## Marine Committee to James Robinson

Sir

Philadelphia March. 12. 1777

The Sachem Sloop of war under your command being ready for sea, after having received on board a quantity of Indigo shipped by the Secret Committee of Congress, You are to proceed from this port to the Island of St. Eustatia, and on your arrival there apply to Mr. Saml. Curson junr. to whom the Indigo is addressed, deliver it to him agreeable to Bills of Lading and take his receipt. On your arrival in that Port wait on the Governor and ask the Liberty and protection of the Port in the name of the United States of America. Take care not to violate the neutrality of it neither suffer your people to behave in any disorderly or irregular manner there—procure the utmost dispatch of your business and receive on board any Stores or Merchandize Mr. Curson, Mr. Henricus Goddet, or Mr. C. Stevenson all of that place may have to ship, or so much thereof as you can with propriety or convenience bring back. Which done you must grant them bills of Lading, receive their dispatches and proceed back for this Coast.

If you can get back to this Port and find it secure do so. If it is guarded by the enemy get into Chesapeake Bay, or into some safe Inlet or harbour and give us the earliest notice of your arrival with an account of what goods you bring back. Should you make any Prizes going or coming, send them into the safest Ports, addressed to the Continental Agents where they arrive. If you carry them into the West Indies you may order perishable commodities or those suited for the Country to be sold provided the property is indisputably Prize, agreeably to the discriptions of Congress, but the Vessels and other parts of the Cargoes must come to the Continent for condemnation.

It is a Standing Instruction of this Committee to all the Navy that Prisoners be used with humanity and kindness and that you pay due attention and obedience to the printed Instructions of the Navy Board. So farewell. We are your friends &c

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "Captain James Robinson of the Sloop Sachem."

## Abraham Clark to William Livingston

Philadela. March 13th. 1777.

The brearer Mr Elmer waits upon your Excellency to desire you'l propose (by a flag) to Genl Howe the exchange of some British or Tory Prisoner for John Gibbon taken by the Enemy at Mount Holly last Decemr. Whether you have any Prisoners taken by your Militia I cant



say. If you have the exchange can readily be effected. Mr Elmer was about moving Congress to make the Application, but this would have been improper. They only do it in particular cases for Officers of distinction. Others are Comprehended in the General Cartel. It is Customary for the Commander in Chief or other Genl officers of the respective States to Nego[t]iate Exchanges for their Militia or Inhabitants.

Mr Elmer came here but today, till which Time I have been alone and could not leave Congress to Attend the Assembly, being unwell & the weather unfavourable I did not think it prudent to go today, and I am told the assembly propose to Adjourn tomorrow, which will make a journey there unnecessary. Dr. Witherspoon went last week to Prince Town & hath not returned. Mr. Serjeant is also there, he Sent his resignation to the Assembly, but it seems they either believe he did not intend resigning or they will not accept it. With all due respect, I am Your Excellencys, Obedient & Humble Servt. Abra. Clark

RC (MHi).

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Thursday 13 March 1777

Mr Hancock's Complimts. to the Honl General Gates, & informs him that the Congress are ready to Confer with him, whenever the State of his Business will admit.<sup>1</sup>

RC (NHi).

<sup>1</sup> On this day Congress appointed a committee of five to confer "upon the general state of affairs" with Gates, who was in Philadelphia seeking clarification of some questions which had arisen in connection with his proposed appointment as adjutant general of the Continental Army. The results of the committee's deliberations with Gates are not known. Eight days later, however, Congress added three more members to this committee and ordered it also to confer with Gen. Nathanael Greene "on the several matters given in charge to him by General Washington," Greene having been sent to Philadelphia by Washington to inform Congress of "many matters essential to the well being of this army." Accordingly, after having met with Greene, the committee issued reports to Congress on March 24, April 3, and April 4, on the basis of which Congress passed resolves about the decisions of councils of war, the exchange of prisoners, the pay of aides-de-camp, and the pay and supply of the army as a whole. Greene, a stickler for punctuality who left Philadelphia before the committee made its second report, was displeased by the pace of business in Congress. "There is so much deliberation and waste of time in the execution of business before this assembly," he complained to Washington shortly before returning to the army, "that my patience is almost exhausted." See Gates to Hancock, February 28, 1777, PCC, item 154, 1:135-36; JCC, 7:175, 189, 196-97, 218, 221-23; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:294-95, 299-301, 310-11; and George Washington Greene, *The Life of Nathanael Greene, Major-General in the Army of the Revolution*, 3 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam and son, 1867-1871), 1:349-52.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 14. 1777

Congress has been sitting several Days and proceeding upon Business. I have been in Town above a Week and have spent much of my Time, in making Inquiries after the cheapest Places in Town for Board and stabling. I have at last removed my Horses from a stable at six and six Pence a Night, to another at three dollars a Week each. So that for the future I am to pay only six dollars a Week for Hay and Oats for my Horses. Oats they must have here, for the Hay is such as our Horses cannot live upon, nor indeed their own.

I am this day to remove my Quarters, from three Pounds a Week for myself and thirty shillings for my servant, to another Place where they vouchsafe to keep me for forty seven and six Pence, and my servant for twenty shillings.<sup>1</sup> I shall then live at the cheapest Lay.<sup>2</sup> Cheap indeed!

What will become of you, I know not. How you will be able to live is past my Comprehension, but I hope the Regulation of Prices, will be of Service to you. I dont know whether I have mentioned to you in any former Letter, that I sent you a Barrell of burr flour from Baltimore, by Capt. Harden, in your Uncles Vessel. I hope she is not taken.

I wish to hear often from you. Believe the Post may be now trusted. Believe me to be more yours, and more anxious for your Welfare than any Words can express. The Government of Pensilvania is taking Root downwards, and bearing Fruit upwards, notwithstanding the Squibbs in the News Papers. They are making Treason Laws and Militia Laws, &c.

The Jersey Government is making a Militia Law too. The People of that State will be all soldiers. They are exasperated, to a great degree, at the Treatment they have received, and are panting for Revenge. The Quakers too are inflamed with Resentment. They say, that they were used worse, than any other People.

In a Time of Warr, and especially a War like this, one may see the Necessity and Utility, of the divine Prohibitions of Revenge, and the Injunctions of forgiveness of Injuries and love of Enemies, which We find in the Christian Religion. Unrestrained, in some degree by these benevolent Laws, Men would be Devils, at such a Time as this.

Prattle for me to my little Friends. Give them my best Wishes, Blessings and Prayers.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:174-75.

<sup>1</sup> Adams lodged at Mrs. Sarah Yard's until March 14, when he moved to Capt. Robert Duncan's on Walnut Street between Second and Third streets. Adams, *Diary* (Butterfield), 2:257n.7.

<sup>2</sup> Rate or terms. *OED*.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

Philadelphia [March 14,] 1777 <sup>1</sup>

There was a Debate on the Subject of Retaliation soon after the arrival of the Congress at Philadelphia, occasioned by a suggestion of General Washington that our Circumstances made it impolitic to use such Language, the Enemy have a superiority over us in Captive Officers at least six to one. That there is still subsisting an agreement for exchange which the resolutions of Congress for retaliation might violate.<sup>2</sup>

Some extraordinary Opinions were thrown out by Mr. Loyal and Doctor Weatherspoon, tending to the Doctrine that we were bound by no such agreements no longer than we found them convenient. Several Gentlemen denied this Doctrine, but maintained that the Enemy's treatment of General Lee was an infringement on their part, and the agreement was therefore become void.

North Carolina vehemently opposed the Doctrine alledging that it violated all public Faith, and was in a word declaring to mankind that we ought never to be trusted. That it was good policy even abstracted from all moral Consideration, to keep inviolate the Faith of Nations, because on that alone was founded all compact between them, that to a young Country the reputation of Fidelity was as Essential as that of Immaculate Chastity to a Young Beauty, the Smallest blot in either must sink the Subject forever in the Estimation of mankind. That if the Cartile (which he was not informed of) was violated by the Resolutions of Congress, he was clearly of Opinion that they ought to be rescin[d]ed. The Debate now turned on the Question whether the Treatment of General Lee was an infringement. The Facts produced to prove it were the Confinement of the General under Custody of the Provost at New York, and the Evasions of General How to the Question whether he should be considered as a Prisoner of War or not. North Carolina was of Opinion this did not amount to a Direct Breach, but that a Categorical answer ought to be demanded and the Enemy informed that a refusal would be deemed a Breach, but that all farther proceeding was premature.

The Congress were of a Different Opinion, and it appeared some days afterwards that General Washington thought of it in the same manner with the Congress.<sup>3</sup>

MS (NN). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Although most of this MS deals with a debate that took place in Congress on March 14, the last paragraph at least was written no earlier than April 11, the day Congress read the letters from Washington cited in note 3, below. On the other hand, it is possible that the entire entry was written about that time because immediately after the final paragraph, which could not have been composed before April 11, Burke added some brief notes on a debate that occurred in Congress on April 8, which are printed below.

<sup>2</sup> For Washington's letters to President Hancock of March 1 and 6, which were debated by Congress in the committee of the whole on the 14th, see PCC, item 152, 3:559-63, 575-76; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:211-13, 252-53; and *JCC*, 7:170, 176-78.

<sup>3</sup> In an April 9 letter to Gen. William Howe, Washington charged that Howe's "discriminating Major-General Lee from other Captive Officers belonging to the American Army" was "utterly irreconcilable to the tenor of our Agreement" on the treatment of prisoners of war. Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:378-79. Washington enclosed this letter in one of his April 10 letters to Hancock, both of which were read in Congress on the 11th. *Ibid.*, pp. 387-89; PCC, item 152, 4:69-72; and *JCC*, 7:253.

## John Hancock to the Virginia Governor and Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. March 14th. 1777.

In Compliance with the above Resolve I am to request you will please to issue Orders for furnishing the Battalion commanded by Colo. Stephen with the Arms in your public Armoury as soon as you possibly can.<sup>1</sup> Whatever Number you may procure for this Purpose and lodge with Colo. Stephen will be either paid, or an equal Number as shall be most agreeable. I have the Honour to be Gentlemen, your most obed & very hble Set.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Governor & Council of Virginia."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:173. On this day Hancock also wrote a letter to Col. Edward Stevens of the Tenth Virginia Regiment informing him of a resolve of the 13th authorizing him to purchase at least "eighty stand of arms" for his men. PCC, item 12A, fol. 161. Four days later Hancock wrote the following brief letter to Deputy Paymaster Benjamin Harrison, Jr., pertaining to Stevens' regiment. "I have wrote to Colo. Stephen of the 10th Virginia Regiment to purchase a Number of Arms, and have directed him to draw upon you for Payment. You will therefore honour his Draughts immediately on their coming to Hand, that the Business may be expedited as fast as possible." PCC, item 12A, fol. 161.

## John Adams to James Warren

March 15. [1777]

Thus far I had written a long time ago, Since which, after many days Deliberation and Debate, a Vote passed for raising the Interest to Six Per Cent.<sup>1</sup> If this Measure should not procure Us Money, I know not what Resources We shall explore.

To read this will be Punishment enough for your omission to write to me all this While. I have recd nothing from you since I left Boston. Yours.

RC (MHi). A continuation of Adams to Warren, February 12. 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See Adams to Warren, February 12, 1777, note 1.



## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Philadelphia Mh. 15th. 1777.

I have the Pleasure to inform you that, beyond my Expectation, I have procured a Resolve of Congress, in favour of our State, for an Order upon the Auditor General for Two hundred thousand Dollars, upon the Loan Office for Sixty Thousand Dollars, and upon the Treasury for One hundred and forty thousand Dollars to be paid out of the new Emission order'd to be issued.<sup>1</sup> Before Congress left Baltimore they order'd a Million of Dollars to be deliver'd to the Auditor General Subject to Draughts from Congress.<sup>2</sup> The Money is on the Road, and so soon as it arrives The Order upon him will be paid and your Commissrs. dispatch'd.

I received a Letter Yesterday from Saml & Robt. Purviance dated Baltimore March 10th. 1777 inclosing a Letter to Me from your Honour, which they say they had received that Morning by Capt. Timothy Coffin who was addressed to them by our State for a Load of Flour & Bar Iron. That they should load & dispatch him as soon as possible, but from the present extreme bad Condition of the Roads it was very difficult to bring Flour or any thing else to Town, therefore Produce would come in but slowly for sometime, That you had sent a General Order on Mr Hillegas the Treasurer, for as much as would load the Vessel. Mr. Hillegas, says he can't pay it without a Warrant on the Order specifying the particular Sum. As this can't be known until the Vessel is loaded, that they shall when that is done, transmit me the Order to obtain a Warrant for the Value shipp'd and close with desiring me to give your Honor the earliest Notice of Coffin's Arrival. I do it, Sir, with great Pleasure; and shall pay them by an Order upon the Treasurer, who will continue at Baltimore some Time, for so much as the Loading &c shall amount to, to be paid out of the 140,000 Dolls. for which I have an Order upon him as before mention'd.

We have nothing remarkable. The President recd. a Letter last Evening from Col. Wayne at Ticonderoga dated the 2d March. Every thing was in Peace. He mentions how the Enemy were posted in Canada, and in doing that says that the famous, now infamous *Paoli* commands at One of them.<sup>3</sup> There are Two British Grenadiers in Town who lately deserted from the Army in the Jersey, they say that the Enemy were in Want of fresh Provisions & Forage, & that there was a red Fever among the Hessians which proved very mortal. From this and other Accounts of the Want of Forage, and from the Loss and Incapacity of their Horses for Service for Want of Food I hope and conclude that they will not be able to move from Brunswick until We shall have collected an Army sufficient to attack and demolish them. I am impatient to hear of an Attack upon Rhode-Island. I hope nothing will prevent it. A successful Attack there would be of infinite Advantage to the Common Cause.

I am in great Haste but with all due Respect, Your Honor's most obedt.,  
humble Servt,

Wm Ellery

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See Ellery to Cooke, March 6, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Done on February 22. *JCC*, 7: 143.

<sup>3</sup> Pasquale Paoli (1725–1807), a Corsican patriot leader, had earned the admiration of colonial Americans for his heroic but ultimately unavailing struggle against French domination of his native island. *DAB*; and Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765–1776* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), pp. 162–63, 180–83, 198–99. Anthony Wayne's letter to Hancock stated that according to some "late Intelligence" Paoli was commanding British troops in Canada, but in fact this intelligence was wrong. *PCC*, item 161, 1:201–2.

## William Ellery to William Vernon

Philadelphia March [15] 1777 <sup>1</sup>

Congress adjourned as I expected to this Place. Since I came here I have seen Mr. Hewes and inquired concerning your Son. He is at Princetown pursuing his Studies. In the Course of Conversation Mr. Hewes mentioned that he had Money of yours in Hand and that he thought it would be better to exchange it for Loan-Office Certificates that now carry an Interest of Six per Centum, than to have it lie dead without increasing. I told him I thought so too and that I was writing to you and would mention it in my Letter as I now do. And now I beg leave to mention to you to take some Lottery tickets. We have nothing new. Every thing was peaceable at Ticonderago the Second of March. The famous or rather infamous Paoli commands a Post in Canada. The Enemy want forage it is said and many of their Horses are dead and others for Want of Food rendered incapable of Service, so that I hope We shall collect enough Force before they are able to make any Movement to destroy them.

[I enclose?] the Address of the Convention of New York which you may not have seen. Give me Leave to hope soon for a Letter from you in the Expectation of which I shall continue to be, Yrs Affectionately,

W Ellery

[P.S.] My Compliments to Mr. Payne

RC (RNHi). A continuation of Ellery to Vernon, February 26, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Ellery's description in this letter of the intelligence Congress had recently received from Ticonderoga indicates that he resumed writing it about the same time he wrote his letter of this date to Nicholas Cooke.

## Robert Morris to George Washington

[March 15, 1777]

I am now at the 15th March & must appologize to you Sir for not answering fully your letter & for not having sent this away long since, but

I have been attacked by a Weakness in my Eyes and Writing is the most dangerous thing I can do whilst it Continues. On this Account I am obliged to absent myself from Congress & refrain from [business] but in all situations of life I shall ever remain with the sincerest esteem Your Excellency's most obed, hble Servant,

Robt Morris

RC (DLC). A continuation of Morris to Washington, March 6, 1777.

## Oliver Wolcott to Joshua Huntington

Sir, Philadelphia 15 March 1777

I wrote to you a few days ago which you will receive.<sup>1</sup> I now send you Directions for Building the 36 Gun Frigate made out by the Board of Assistants. They Apprehend that this may be sufficient for yr. Direction. They have no Draught and say it would take a Fortnight to make one. But if you shall think it necessary you will inform and it will be provided for you.

Thirty Thousand Dollars goes forward for you and Mr. Cotten who is now here. You will receive your part of the Money of Govr. Trumbull. Rigging and Ducks I cannot at present direct where they may be had, but they must be provided for you. You will from time to time Advise the Marine Committee of whatever you may Want. I Am, Sir, your Most Obedient, humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

P.S. I advised you in my last to direct your Letters to such Gentlemen as might be in the Marine Committee from our State. But upon Consideration think that there would be more Propriety in Addressing your Letters To the Marine Committee rather than to any Individual. The President of Congress as such cannot properly be addressed in this Department and as a Marine Board will always exist an Address to them is doubtless best—except on any Difficulty of a particular Nature you will inform any Gentleman in a Way which will be most agreeable to you. Sir &c

O.W.

You will receive 17,000 Dollars of Govr. Trumbull. I have delivered Mr. Cotten who is here 13,000 dollars.

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Wolcott to Joshua Huntington, March 11, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 16. 1777

The Spring advances, very rapidly, and all Nature will soon be clothed in her gayest Robes. The green Grass, which begins to shew

itself, here, and there, revives in my longing Imagination my little Farm, and its dear Inhabitants. What Pleasures has not this vile War deprived me of? I want to wander, in my Meadows, to ramble over my Mountains, and to sit in Solitude, or with her who has all my Heart, by the side of the Brooks. These beautiful Scènes would contribute more to my Happiness, than the sublime ones which surround me.

I begin to suspect that I have not much of the Grand in my Composition. The Pride and Pomp of War, the continual Sound of Drums and Fifes as well played, as any on the World, the Prancings and Tramlings of the Light Horse numbers of whom are paraded in the Streets every day, have no Charms for me. I long for rural and domestic scènes, for the warbling of Birds and the Prattle of my Children.<sup>1</sup> Dont you think I am somewhat poetical this morning, for one of my Years, and considering the Gravity, and Insipidity of my Employment. As much as I converse with Sages and Heroes, they have very little of my Love or Admiration. I should prefer the Delights of a Garden to the Dominion of a World. I have nothing of Cæsars Greatness in my soul. Power has not my Wishes in her Train. The Gods, by granting me Health, and Peace and Competence, the Society of my Family and Friends, the Perusal of my Books, and the Enjoyment of my Farm and Garden, would make me as happy as my Nature and State will bear.

Of that Ambition which has Power for its Object, I don't believe I have a Spark in my Heart . . .<sup>2</sup> There [are] other Kinds of Ambition of which I have a great deal.<sup>3</sup>

I am now situated, in a pleasant Part of the Town, in Walnutt Street, in the south side of it, between second and third Streets, at the House of Mr. Duncan, a Gentleman from Boston, who has a Wife and three Children. It is an agreeable Family. General Wolcott of Connecticut, and Coll. Whipple of Portsmouth, are with me in the same House. Mr. Adams has removed to Mrs. Cheasmans, in fourth Street near the Corner of Markett Street, where he has a curious Group of Company consisting of Characters as opposite, as North and South. Ingersol, the Stamp man and Judge Admiralty, Sherman, an old Puritan, as honest as an Angell and as *(stanch as a blood Hound)* firm *(as a Rock)* in the Cause of American Independence, as Mount Atlass, and Coll. Thornton, as droll and funny as Tristram Shandy. Between the Fun of Thornton, the Gravity of Sherman, and the formal Toryism of Ingersol, Adams will have a curious Life of it. The Landlady too who has buried four Husbands, one Tailor, two shoemakers and Gilbert Tenant [Tennent], and still is ready for a fifth, and well deserves him too, will add to the Entertainment. Gerry and Lovell are yet at Miss Leonards, under the Auspices of Mrs. Yard.

Mr. Hancock has taken an House in Chestnut Street, near the Corner of fourth Street near the State House.

March 17.



We this day received Letters from Dr. Franklin and Mr. Deane.<sup>4</sup> I am not at Liberty to mention particulars. But in general the Intelligence is very agreeable. I am now convinced, there will be a general War.

LB (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:176-77.

<sup>1</sup> Adams wrote letters of parental advice to his sons John Quincy and Thomas this day, and to his son Charles and his daughter Abigail the next day. See Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:177-80.

<sup>2</sup> Suspension points in text.

<sup>3</sup> Adams later made this insertion between paragraphs: "Note. Literary and Professional, I suppose. But is not the Heart deceitfull above all Things? April 9. 1776 [*i.e.* 1777]."

<sup>4</sup> Benjamin Franklin's October [*i.e.* December] 8, 1776, letter to President Hancock and his December 8-10, letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, and Silas Deane's November 28 letter to the same committee, were read in Congress on March 19, 1777. *JCC*, 7: 184, 186; and *PCC*, item 82, 1:5-12. These letters and several others written by Deane near the end of November which may have arrived in Philadelphia at this time, are in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:196-216, 218-23. Although only Franklin's letter to Hancock is specifically mentioned in the journals, it was doubtless his December 8 letter with a postscript of the tenth that William Whipple had in mind when he noted that "The Last Letters from France were the 10th Decr." See Whipple to John Langdon, March 18, 1777. For a discussion of Deane's November 28 letter, see John Adams to James Warren, March 18, 1777.

## John Hancock to Joseph Trumbull

Sir, Philada. March 16th. 1777

Your Favour of the 5th of March I duly received and laid before Congress, in Consequence of which they have ordered that four Hundred Thousand Dollars be sent you, Part in Bills and an Order on the Loan Office in New Hampshire. Three Hundred and fifty Thousand Dollars are given in Charge to Captain Bate, and enclosed you have a Draft on the Commissioner of the Loan Office in New Hampshire for fifty Thousand Dollars, which I hope will answer your present Purpose.<sup>1</sup> I have given a Draft to Mr. Carpenter Wharton for fifty Thousand Dollars for your Account.<sup>2</sup>

As you mention your not having received the Warrants on the Loan Office for three Hundred Thousand Dollars ordered you in January last, I now enclose you an Order on the Loan Office in Massachusetts for one Hundred and fifty Thousand, and another on the Loan Office in Connecticut for the same Sum, making in the whole three Hundred Thousand Dollars.

Altho the Warrants were surely sent, yet they may have miscarried. However if they have been received since, you will return me these.

I wish you every Good, and am, your most obed. S[ervt],

John Hancock Presid.

RC (Ct). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:180.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:181.

## James Lovell to John Trumbull

My Dear Sir

Phila. 16 March 1777

I have recd yours of the 3d and though I approve of the Manly Sensibility which govern'd you on the late Occasion, yet I am sorry that any Accident should have given you this particular Occasion of shewing yourself a Man of Spirited Honor.<sup>1</sup> Your character is unblemished, in the Opinion of those who were to forward your Commission, therefore I have attributed past Omissions on their part to Accident. I cannot think of Design, in what has happened.

I shewed your Letter to your friend Gen. Gates who had before made the most honorable mention of you to me. He will not do without you; therefore if the proper Alteration of Date is made, I will not think you can obstinately disappoint his Hopes, to say nothing of mine.

Perhaps before I sent this, I may have a word or two more to say on this Subject. I took up the pen to prevent missing an Opportunity thro' the hasty Call of the Bearer, of Assuring you of the Love & Esteem of  
&c &c,  
J.L.

Tr (ScHi).

<sup>1</sup> John Trumbull had been appointed deputy adjutant general by Gen. Horatio Gates on June 28, 1776, and by Congress on September 12, 1776. *JCC*, 5:753.

In his March 3, 1777, letter to Lovell, Trumbull explained why he was returning his commission as deputy adjutant general in the Northern Department. The letter accompanied Trumbull's February 22, 1777, letter to President Hancock stating that: "I find the Commission Dated the 12th Sept. 1776, which, Sir, is an insuperable Bar to my accepting it. I have serv'd in that office since the 28th June last, by the appointment of the Hon. Maj.-Gen. Gates, who was authorized to make that Appointment, by particular Instructions from Congress." Henry Laurens Papers, ScHi; and *Historical Magazine* 1st ser. 1 (October 1857): 289.

Congress, which had received Trumbull's resignation on March 14 and referred it to the Board of War, ordered a motion to date his commission from June 28, 1776, to lie on the table on March 19. Lovell then sent a more detailed letter of advice on March 22, to which Trumbull replied on March 30: "But I designed to have my resignation accepted; nor can I consent to the method which they propose of regaining the Post I have quitted." *Historical Magazine* 1st ser. 1 (October 1857): 292. After receiving General Gates' March 19 letter on the subject and being informed by Lovell of Trumbull's defiant response of March 30, Congress resolved on April 19 "that the resignation of John Trumbull, late deputy adjutant general of the northern department, be accepted." *JCC*, 7:176, 185, 187, 281.

John's brother Joseph, who was then in Philadelphia to consult on the commissariat general, explained what had happened in a letter of May 6: "I have a

letter from Genl Gates of 29th ulto per Mr Yancey in which he mentions to me a Desire of having you back again to him. But He did not know what had been done here in that affair. After Mr. Lovell recd your last Letter, it was moved in Congress to have Genl Gates directed to fill your place. Doctr Witherspoon rose & said he had no Objection, in Case he was restrained from appointing Mr Trumbull, on which one of your Friends rose & said there was no need of a restriction of that kind, as that young Gentleman would not stoop to Accept the Offer if made. This I have wrote to Genl Gates, & I have inclosed to him the Copy's which you gave me, with the above anecdote, & I understand Congress are about appointing Majr. Frazer to that place." Joseph Trumbull to John Trumbull, May 6, 1777, Trumbull Papers, Ct. Indeed, President Hancock informed General Gates on April 29, 1777, that "it is not the intention of Congress that Mr. Trumbull should be reappointed."

## Lewis Morris to the New York Convention

Sir Philadelphia March 16th 1777

I had the pleasure of receiving your Letter by Express, and Should immediately in compliance with your request have laid the Papers it contained before Congress, but for Some reasons that I flatter myself will be very obvious to you, I thought it prudent to defer it for sometime.<sup>1</sup>

From the circumstances of the adjournment of Congress from Baltimore to this place, there is now a very unequal representation. I am alone from the State of New York, as Mr Lewis is not yet come up, and it being of the utmost importance to that state as well as individuals thereof, for whom I have the highest esteem, I have declined risking the event of so important an affair, untill on a full and equal Assembly the justice of it may have its proper consideration and effect.

Mr Robert Morris has very friendly, and chearfully, offered me all the Assistance and advice in his power. From the abilities and influence of this Gentleman I anticipate every success that could be wished—and doubt not you will be of the Same opinion with myself when you are informed by the members of the Convention that have attended Congress, how much the Sentiments of Mr. Morris have the influence they aim at.

Tho' justice and impartiality should be the ruling principle in every publick Assembly, yet when Interest, ambition, or any such motives interfere, such is the depravity of human Nature, that they are apt to be biased, and when a majority is to determine a question, tho the Cause may be just, there is reason to dread the event; and this is the principal reason for my delaying the bringing on this Affair.

You may depend Sir, I will be watchfull to introduce your Letter and the subject of it into Congress upon the first dawn of a favourable chance for its success, and then, as it will be supported by such powerfull influence as I have mentioned, I think I may give you an assurance, that tho' not Speedily, yet eventually, it will terminate in a manner agreeable to your wishes.



I have the honor to be sir, Your most Obedt Huml Servt,  
Lewis Morris

RC (PPIIn). Addressed: "To Abraham Ten Broeck Esquire."

<sup>1</sup> For the New York Committee of Safety's March 1 letter to President Hancock, together with enclosed resolves of January 20 about insurgency in northern New York, see PCC, item 67, 2:25-26; and *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:777-79, 820-21. As to the use the New York delegates made of these papers, see William Duer to the New York Convention, April 17, 1777.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. March 17th. 1777.

I have the Honour to transmit you sundry Resolves of Congress of a very important Nature, to which I beg Leave to solicit your Attention.<sup>1</sup>

The Congress having had your Letters of the 1st and 6th Inst.<sup>2</sup> under Consideration, have come to the enclosed Resolve on the Subject, by which you will perceive they decline making any Alteration in the Resolve of the 6th January,<sup>3</sup> and that it was not their Intention that Colo. Campbell should experience any other Hardship than such Confinement as is necessary to his Security for the End they had in View when they passed that Resolve.

The obvious Distinction made by Genl. Howe in his Treatment of Genl. Lee who is notoriously committed to the Custody of the Provost and denied his Parole, while our other Officers are admitted to it, was the Ground on which Congress proceeded when they passed that Resolve, the Intention of which was to shew, that in Proportion as Severities against him were increased, the same Treatment should be exercised on six Field Officers.

The Principle of Retaliation was early adopted by the States of America, and if adhered to, will be the most likely Way to prevent our Enemies from making Distinctions, which have no other Foundation but the Gratification of their Revenge, Gen. Lee having an undoubted Right to every Indulgence that our other Officers Prisoners among them may receive.

I have wrote the Governor and Council of Virginia, and likewise to Colo. Stephen on the Subject of the enclosed Resolves.<sup>4</sup>

The Congress have endeavoured to put a Stop to Foreigners coming over to America to enter the Service, not only by directing the Committee of Secret Correspondence to write to the Agents abroad to discourage them from such Views, but by declaring that they shall not be employed, unless they are well acquainted with our Language.

Your several Favours of the 20th, 23d and 28th Feby<sup>5</sup> and 1st and 6th of March have been duely received and laid before Congress. I am also this Minute honoured with your Favour of the 14th<sup>6</sup> which shall be laid



before Congress as soon as possible. I have the Honour to be with Sentiments of the greatest Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves discussed in the body of the letter, Hancock also enclosed March 12–14 resolves about state assessments of blankets, foreign volunteers, commissions for foreign officers, and widows' pensions. *JCC*, 7:172, 174, 177.

<sup>2</sup> These letters are in PCC, item 152, 3:559–63, 575–76, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:211–13, 252–53.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:179; and Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates, March 14, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:173; and Hancock to Patrick Henry, March 14, 1777.

<sup>5</sup> These letters are in PCC, item 152, 3:533–39, 545–47, 553–55, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:168–71, 193–95, 204–6.

<sup>6</sup> See PCC, item 152, 3:595–98, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:285–87.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia 17th March 1777

My last was the 22d Feby since which I have not been favor'd with any of Yours.

Congress adjourn'd the 28th & did not meet here till the 11th inst<sup>1</sup> & have now but a thin House, which makes the Business extreemly Laborious for those that attend, the whole time of the Members being taken up on Committees when the House is not setting. The expence of living here is beyond all Bounds. Everything has risen more than double since you left this. Unless some effectual stop can be put to the sinking Curr[enc]y I dont know what will be the Consequence, & how that is to be effected I cannot devise, unless by taxation. Why has not N.H. adopted this measure? She is exceedingly fond of following the example of Massachusetts & Connecticut; in some things why not in this? Which in my judgment is the wisest they ever set her.

How goes on Your recruiting service? Have any Troops marched yet for Ticonderoga, that post is of great importance to the Eastern States, therefore demands their particular attention. Some are still apprehensive of an Attack on this City, but I must confess I am not one of those, for was the Enemy to make such an attempt, or were they to succeed so far as to get possession of the City, they must be Ruined. This is so evident that I think they will not make the attempt. . . . Our Army is still small but increasing, and I hope will be in a condition to drive the Enemy out of N. Jersey before they can be reinforced from Europe. . . . however the dispatches were saved,<sup>2</sup> amongst which were some letters from Dr. F. date at Nantes, 10th Dec. which was a few days after his arrival. He had sent to the Court of Versailles to know if he wo'd be received in his public Carecter (which there is not the least doubt of) & was to set out in a few

days. The British Court has demanded Mr. Deane to be delivered up, but was refused by the French Court. . . . The greatest preparations are making for war all over Europe, even Holland, who always chose to sleep in a whole Skin, is now arming. . . .<sup>3</sup>

MS not found. Reprinted from extracts in Burnett, *Letters*, 2:303; *Stan V. Henkels Catalog*, no. 1074 (1912), item 284; and *C. F. Libbie & Co. Catalog*, January 6, 1891, item 3216.

<sup>1</sup> A quorum of Congress was not available until March 12, but see John Hancock to the New York Delegates, March 11, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> Whipple was writing about the sinking of the *Sally*. For further information on this topic and the dispatches delivered to Congress, see John Adams to Abigail Adams, March 16, 1777, note 4.

<sup>3</sup> Remainder of letter missing.

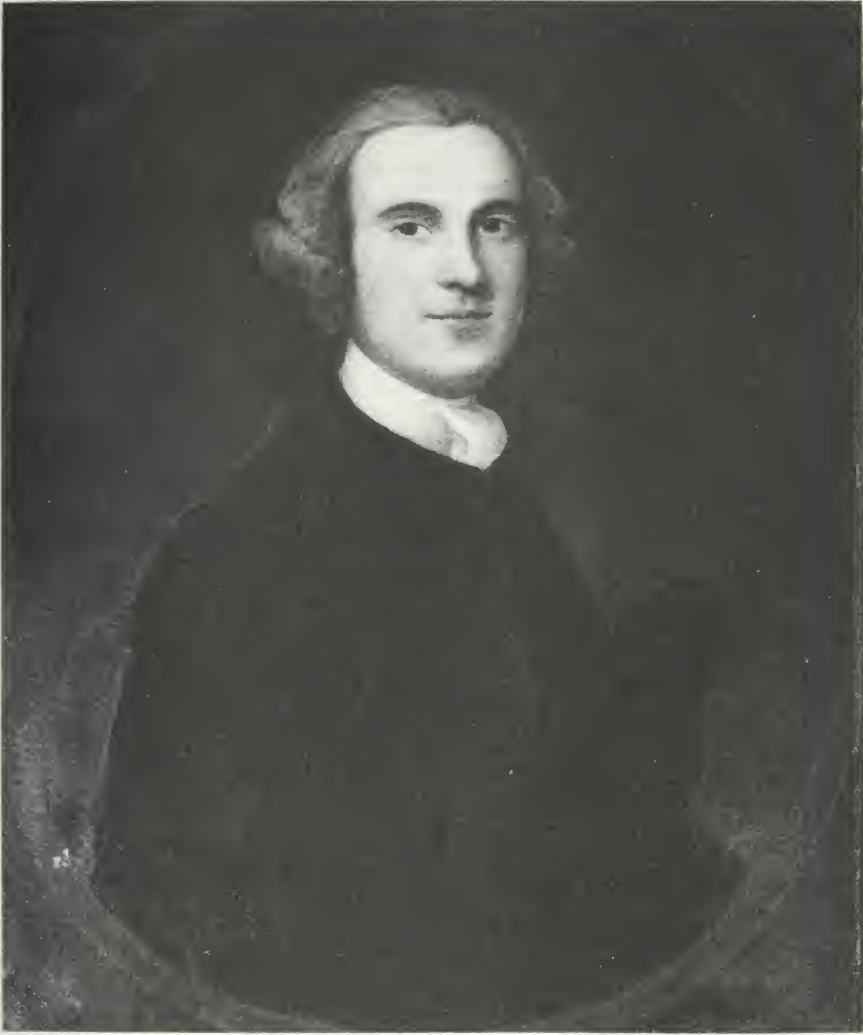
## John Witherspoon to David Witherspoon

Dr David

Philadelphia March 17. 1777

Two Days ago I received your Letter of the first of February and it gratifies me exceedingly that you and Fanny are so punctual in writing. Your Letter is well written & quite free from bad Spelling so that I hope by pains and practice you will write a good & fair current hand. I do assure you this will be a very good Service to you & indeed would of itself at this time and place procure you a handsome Livelyhood. At the same time I have the pleasure to say that Fannys Letter is just as well spelt & rather the more neatly written of the two. I have given her my Advice which she will communicate to you & you must tell her all that follows of News.

Your Mother was well by the last Accounts which were written these few Days. I was somewhat apprehensive for her after Mrs. Smiths Death & would have brought her away but as she could not go home she chose to stay where she is. Your Brother John has been ill these 4 Weeks of the Rheumatism which has reduced him a good deal. He is here still in the house & mostly in bed but we think him out of Danger & he has been up a little this Day. He lies now by me in the Room & Sends his kind Love to you all. I hope it will please God to recover him wholly in a little time but till then it is uncertain what plan will be followed for his Employment. He will have Business as soon as he is capable of it. I saw a Letter lately from James to his Uncle & conversed with Lewis Morris this Day who left him hearty & well on Friday last. I understand he is very happy with General Maxwell who is a Man of Spirit & who has been the chief man who has directed the Skirmishes against the Enemy. I was at Princeton from Saturday Se'enight till Wednesday Morning last. Your uncle is well. Old Mr. Serjeant is dead of the small pox. Judge Stockton is not very well in health & much spoken against for his Conduct. He Signed Howes declaration & also gave his Word of honour that he would not meddle in the



Richard Stockton

least in American affairs during the War. Mrs. Cochran was sent to the Enemies Lines by a flag of Truce and when Mr. Cochran came out to meet his wife he said to the Officers that went with the flag that Judge Stockton had brought Evidence to General Howe to prove that he was on his Way to seek a protection when he was taken. This he denies to be true yet many credit it but Mr. Cochrans known quarrel with him makes it very doubtful to candid Persons.<sup>1</sup>

I think I wrote before of the state of my property.<sup>2</sup> John Graham has been a very faithful servant. He has threshed and sold above a hundred Bushels of wheat Since the Enemy fled & could he get hands would soon sell all that remains. I ordered all my books to be put up in boxes & sent to the Country lest the Enemy should come that Way again but at present we are entertaining hopes that they will not come this Way at all. There are also about 300 Bushels of my Potatoes left which I have directed to be sold. Probably I will go again to Princeton the End of this Week to see further about my affairs.

Letters are just come from Dr Franklin who arrived safely in France the 8 of December but had not been in Paris when he wrote. Things however promise very well from that Quarter.<sup>3</sup>

I believe I wrote you that Dick Stockton and a large party were taken by our People. Mr McDonald is come back & taken the Oaths to the State of New Jersey & behaves well.

I shall leave this Letter open till to morrow & then if possible write another to Mr Smith & add what further occurs to me. I suppose you understood by my former Letters that I have no Objection to your visiting us this Spring with your Brother & Sister and I have not a Glimmering of hope that we may get your Mother to Princeton by that time. Hitherto every body has expected the Enemy to push this Way but now it begins to be judged that their intention is to go up the North River to effect a Junction with Carlton if possible which was the last years Scheme. If so it will be a happy Circumstance for us & I hope no loss to the public. You see my Dear Boy how I look pleasurably upon your writing to me with long Letters.

I am Dr David Your affec Father,

Jno Witherspoon

RC (DLC photostat).

<sup>1</sup> After his capture by the British near the beginning of December 1776, Stockton took the oath of allegiance to the king contained in the proclamation issued by Lord Howe on November 30 of that year. It is impossible to determine if Stockton took this step out of personal conviction or because of harsh treatment by the British. In any event, on December 2, 1777, he also signed the oaths of abjuration and allegiance prescribed by the New Jersey legislature. See *JCC*, 7:12-13; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:92; and John Hancock to George Washington, January 7, 1777. In this connection it is interesting to note that as late as December 1774 Stockton had submitted a plan for Anglo-American reconciliation to Lord Dartmouth, then the Secretary of State for the American Department, which is printed in *The Historical Magazine, and Notes and Queries, concerning the Antiquities, History and Biography of America*, 2d ser. 4 (1868): 228-29, and



discussed in Larry R. Gerlach, *Prologue to Independence: New Jersey in the Coming of the American Revolution* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1976), pp. 230–31.

<sup>2</sup> See Witherspoon to David Witherspoon, February 12, 1777, note 1.

<sup>3</sup> See John Adams to Abigail Adams, March 16, 1777, note 4.

## John Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Philadelphia March 18. 1777

I had this Morning the Pleasure of your Favour of Feb. 22 by the Post.<sup>1</sup> This is the first Letter from you Since I left you.

You are anxious to know, what Expectations are to be entertained of foreign Aid. I wish, Sir, it was in my Power to communicate to you, the little that I know of this Matter. But I am under Such Injunctions and Engagements to communicate nothing relative to foreign affairs that I ought not to do it: and if I was at Liberty, Such is the Risque of Letters by the Post, or any other Conveyance, that it would be imprudent. Thus much I may Say, that We have Letters from Dr Franklin and Mr Deane; both agree that every Thing is as they could wish, but the Dr had but just arrived, had not been to Paris, and therefore could know nothing of the Cabinet. The noted Dr Williamson is arrived full of encouraging Matter, but what Confidence is to be put in him, or what Dependence to be had on his Intelligence I know not.<sup>2</sup> Franklin, Deane & Williamson all agree in opinion that a War will take Place. The Reception that is given to our Privateers and Merchantmen, in every Part of the French Dominions is decisively encouraging. Weaks who carried the Dr, took two Prizes, Persons enough offered to purchase them, without Condemnation or Tryal, and to run the Risque of the Illegality of it. Perhaps they may be ransomed. Thus much you may depend on, that you may have any Thing that France affords, in the Way of Manufactures, Merchandize or Warlike Stores, for Sending for it. I can go no further as yet. Congress has done as much as they ought to do and more than I thought they ought to have done, before they did it.

I will hazard a prophecy for once, and it is this that there will as certainly be a general War in Europe, as there will be a Kingdom of France or Spain. How soon it will be, I wont precisely determine but I have no more doubt that it will be within a year to come than I have that it will be at all.<sup>3</sup>

Enclosed you have a Newspaper, which when you have read I wish you would send to the foot of Penn's Hill. I am, my Friend yours &c.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Warren's February 22 letter is in *Warren-Adams Letters*, 1:294–97.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh Williamson (1735–1819), Philadelphia physician, had gone to London in 1774 to secure subscriptions for the academy in New Ark, Del. While there, he was befriended by Benjamin Franklin and became a public defender of the Ameri-

can cause. Nevertheless, Silas Deane had been informed by Edward Bancroft, a British intelligence agent, that "Dr. Williamson, of Pennsylvania, who came over hither with Mr. Ewing, and who (though ostensibly a zealous American) is secretly a Spy in the service of Government, and has been in Holland some time, collecting intelligence, is now arrived for the same purpose in Paris; that by yesterday's mail Letters were brought from him to administration which contained some things respecting you and me; that he besides wrote to a ministerial Gentleman here, and acquainted him that I had lived and been very intimate with you in Paris; that I doubtless must be concerned in your proceedings whatever they might be, and that I ought to be watched &c. &c. for the sake of Detecting Correspondence & making Discoveries; & this he recommended to have immediately done." Bancroft to Deane, September 13, 1776, *NYHS Collections* 19 (1886): 240-41.

Consequently, Deane denounced Williamson as a spy in letters of October 1 and November 28, 1776, to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:288, 374. And even the British ambassador to France, Lord Stormont, thought he was a potential British agent, reporting to Lord Weymouth on October 9, 1776: "I am assured that Deane was much displeased with Dr. Williamson, and among other Things reproached Him for the Visit he made me. I mention this the rather as thinking it possible that Williamson who I imagine is returned to London and who appeared to Me to be well enough calculated for being a double Spy might be of some Use now that he finds himself Obnoxious to His Countrymen." Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:684-85.

But contrary to the expectations of Deane and Stormont, Williamson did not return to London, sailing instead in December for Philadelphia on the ship *Sally*, which was forced aground by a British cruiser off the Delaware coast. There Williamson escaped in a small boat with his dispatches, which ironically included Deane's letter denouncing him. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1302; William Whipple to Joseph Whipple, March 19, 1777; and John Adams to Abigail Adams, March 16, 1777, note 4.

Williamson, who later established himself as a merchant in Edenton, N.C., represented that state in Congress, 1782-85, 1788. *DAB*.

<sup>3</sup> Warren's April 3 response to this letter is in the *Warren-Adams Letters*, 1:309-10.

## Samuel Adams to Mercy Scollay

My dear Miss Scollay

Philadelphia March 18 1777

Your Favor of the 11th of Feby by Mr Bromfield did not reach my hand till yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I admire your Fidelity to our departed Friend, discovered in your unceasing anxiety for the Education and future well being of his Children. A few Days before I left Boston in October last, I had an opportunity of conversing with one of the Mr Warrens upon the Subject. I told him what we had proposd for Miss Betsy; but there seemd to be a Difficulty in removing her from the Place where she had been invited to live, upon the Score of Friendship to her late Father; and had been treated with so much Civility and Kindness. With Respect to the youngest Son and Daughter, I mentioned my strong Desire that they might be continued under your Care; and that Means might be contrivd to have the

eldest Son sent to Dummer School. I informd him that Master Moody was a Man of great Benevolence of Heart, and that his warm Affection for the Father, would be a powerful Motive with him to employ the utmost Attention in the Education of the Son. I urgd these things with as much Freedom as so delicate a Subject would admit of. He expressd his Obligation, and spoke of you in Terms of great Respect and Friendship, which inducd me to hope that the Interview would be attended with happy Effects. You know how engagd I was in a Multiplicity of Affairs during my short Stay in Boston. I wishd for opportunities of rendering more substantial Service to these Orphans, but it was not then in my Power.

While I was in Baltimore an opportunity presented of making a Proposal, which, if agreed to, would be honorary to my Friend and beneficial to his Son.<sup>2</sup> General Mercer having been slain in Battle, or rather barbarously murderd, a Motion was made in Congress for a Monument to be erected to his Memory, and that his youngest Son should be educated at the Expence of the Continent. I did not think my self partial in judging that the Services and Merit of General Warren considerd as a Patriot or a Soldier were not inferior to those of General Mercer, and therefore added to the Motion, that the same Honor should [*be*] paid to his Memory and that one of his Sons should be educated. I proposd the eldest. It was agreed that my Motion should be first enterd on the Journal, and a Committee was appointed to consider of them both. Congress soon after adjourn'd to this Place. The Gentlemen of the Committee are not all of them arrivd. I am perswaded it will be agreed to in the Committee, but as the Determination in the House may be uncertain, I think it best that it should not be made known abroad, till we see the Event.

Dr John Warren is now in this City. I have conversd with him. I freely offerd my opinion that the eldest Son should be sent as speedily as possible to Dummer School and the two youngest Children remain with you. He heard my opinion with great Candor and said he thought it a good Proposal, and mentiond you with great Respect. With Regard to Betsy, the same Difficulty which was started in the Conversation with his Brother, labourd in his Mind. It is indeed a Difficulty. I observd to him that she was in a critical Time of Life, and that I was well assured that the utmost Care would be taken of her in your Fathers Family. He was of the same opinion, and thought it best *that the three Children should be kept together*. As the Conversation passd in the Time of the sitting of Congress, I was obligd to break off sooner than I should otherwise have done, not without sanguine Hopes that these Matters will be concluded agreeable to your Mind. Such a Conclusion, I think will be most conducive to the Wellfare of the Children of my much valued absent Friend. The Doctor will leave this Place for Boston today. I have not Leisure now to write by him to my friends but expect to have an opportunity by Express in a few Days when I expect to forward this. I shall then acknowledge a Letter I lately receivd from your Father. Please to present my friendly Regards to



him and his Family, and to Mr Savage for whom I have long had a cordial Affection. Pray tell him that one of the South Carolina Gentlemen was so obliging to me as to forward his Letter to his Son with his own by a safe hand.

Our Friends will be glad to hear that we have this Day receivd a very agreeable Letter from Dr Franklin in France. The Vessel which brought the Letter was taken near the Capes of Delaware, having on board Fire Arms, Lead, Blankets &c belonging to the Continent, The Quantity of neither as yet ascertained. This is indeed a Misfortune, but we shall do very well for all.

I shall write to some of our particular Friends, upon the Subject which you have so much at Heart, and wish to be honord with the Continuance of your Letters. You must beleive me to be with great Sincerity your Friend and very humble Servant,

Samuel Adams

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> The February 11, 1777, letter of Mercy Scollay, daughter of Boston merchant John Scollay, is in the Adams Papers, NN.

<sup>2</sup> For Adams' previous actions in Congress on behalf of Joseph Warren, see Samuel Adams to James Warren, February 1, 1777, note 4. The three youngest children of Joseph Warren received no congressional support until Congress resolved on July 1, 1780, to defray the expense of the maintenance and education of them "to the amount of the half-pay of a major general, to commence at the time of his death, and continue until the youngest of the said children shall be of age." See *JCC*, 17:581; and Adams, *Writings* (Cushing), 4:167-71.

## John Hancock to Philip Schuyler

Sir,

Philada. March 18th. 1777.

I have the Honour to transmit you sundry Resolves of Congress in Obedience to their Commands.

The Number of Foreigners already employd in the Army of these States is a prodigious Weight upon the Service; and the Evil is likely to encrease unless a speedy Stop can be put to it. For this Purpose, the Congress have not only determined that no Commissions should be granted to any foreign Officers, who are ignorant of the English Language, but have directed the Committee of Secret Correspondence to write to their Agents abroad to discourage Gentlemen from coming to America with Expectation of being taken into the Service, unless they are acquainted with our Language.<sup>1</sup>

The Sense of Congress relative to some Expressions in your Letter of the is so clearly conveyed in the enclosed Resolves, that I shall only add, it is their Expectation you will be more guarded for the future; and that you write in a Stile better adapted to their Rank & Dignity, as well as to your own Character.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, with every Sentiment of Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed Svt.

J. H. Presid.



LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:174, 177.

<sup>2</sup> In his February 4 letter to Hancock, Schuyler criticized Congress for failing to inform him of the reasons for its dismissal of Dr. Samuel Stringer, the former director of the military hospital in Schuyler's department, and insinuated that it had been remiss in not rebuking Commissary General Joseph Trumbull for his reflections on Schuyler in a letter to William Williams of November 18, 1776, which had been intercepted by the British and published in a Loyalist newspaper in New York. PCC, item 153, 3:9-14; and *Am. Archives*, 5th ser. 3:1497-98. On March 15 Congress declared that Schuyler's suggestion that it owed him an explanation for Stringer's dismissal was "highly derogatory to the honour of Congress" and ordered Hancock to inform the general that henceforth his letters should be "written in a stile more suitable to the dignity of the representative body of these free and independant states, and to his own character as their officer." As to Schuyler's remarks about Trumbull, Congress resolved that although they were "ill-advised and highly indecent," it had no wish to interfere in disputes between army officers. *JCC*, 7:180-81.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir, (No. 11) Philadelphia 18th March 1777

Yours of the 18th Ulto with a copy of the same, is just come to hand.<sup>1</sup> My last to you was the 9th or 10th inst. The uncertainty of the post has prevented my sending by that Conveyance for some time past but it has now got in a more regular way. I have always been perticular in mentioning what Letter I have rec'd from you & Laterly have number'd mine so that you may easily discover if any miscarries. I shod also have the same satisfaction if you wod take the trouble of pursuing the same method.

I hope the Money by Mr Betten reach'd you soon after the date of your last but I find that will be but a small part of your demand.<sup>2</sup> However I shall do my endeavor to keep you Supplied. It is of importance that the vessels shod be sent to Baltimore, for otherwise how will you get Iron for the 74 gun ship, besides it will be a great advantage to your place to have some Flour. I therefore hope you will be able to procure two vessels of 60 to 80 Ton each as mention'd in Some of my former letters by order of Committee. As to the Brig Morris I fear she is taken as there is no accots of her arrival. If she had a short passage to the Capes of Virginia she must have arriv'd there about the time that the Enemies ships were in Chesepeake Bay. They left that Bay about the 25—but we'll hope for the best. Perhaps she might have a long passage and if she arriv'd there since the 25 it's probable we might not have heard of her yet. I heartily wish that both may arrive for I assure you the Public very much want to make remittance to Europe. The gentn. you mention for Lieutts. for Capt. Roche I am sure are very good men but I Immagine the Committee will not appoint officers for a ship as soon as she is rais'd. Besides you'll find by some of my former letters that Capt. Roche's Carrecter is impeach'd & it's uncertain whether he will be continu'd in the command, & in case he

shod. be remov'd, perhaps those Gentn woud not chuse to go in the ship. Be this as it may, the berths will be kept for them till Roches affair is determin'd. You have done very well in [*having*] procur'd a number of masts. If they are not wanted for the Navy they may be shipt for Europe, where no doubt they will be exceptable.

Inclos'd you have the dimentions for the 74 gun ship. I suppose they will be serviceable in preparing the Timber. It is not desir'd that the building of her shod. be so Hurried as to be any disadvantage to the ship. I hope no pains will be spaired to make her as good a ship as can be Built in America. I wish the accounts of the Raliegth co'd be sent forward, I expected they woud have been here sometime ago. Please to observe there shod be a separate accot of what you pay the People.

Yesterday Letters were receiv'd from Dr. F—— which were dated at Nants a few days after his arrival there. He was to set out for Paris in a day or two. He was receivd with great joy & no doubt will be so receiv'd at Court for the accots. receiv'd there for some time before his arrival were all on the dark side. A demand has been of Mr. Deane by the British Court which was possitively refused by the Court of France. Very great preparations for war are making all over Europe; there does not seem to be the least doubt of a general war. The last Letters from France were the 10th Decr. Its now time to Expect later & more interesting intelligence which I hope I shall have the Pleasure of transmitting you soon. In the mean time be assured that I am with great truth your Most sincere Friend & humle Sert,

Wm. Whipple

RC (Ronald von Klaussen, State of Florida, 1976).

<sup>1</sup> An extract of Langdon's February 18 letter to Whipple is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1226.

<sup>2</sup> Langdon had told Whipple that he would need \$65,000 for naval expenses in the near future. Ibid.

## Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams

My dear Betsy

Philade March 19 1777

I wrote to you by the last Post, and am resolv'd to write by every Post as well as other opportunities. If I have Nothing more to say to you, I flatter my self you will be pleas'd when I have it in my Power to tell you, as I now do, that I am in good Health and Spirits. I must remind you that the last Letter I receivd from you is dated the 26th of January. I am in daily Expectation of receiving another. You do not conceive with how much Satisfaction I read your Letters. I wish therefore that you would not omit writing to me by the Post if other safe Opportunities do not present.

Yesterday we receivd a very agreeable Letter from Doctor Franklin dated at Nantes (in France) the 8th of December. By this Letter, things

appear in a very favorable Light to America in that Kingdom. A general War was thought to be unavoidable. The Differences between Spain & Portugal were not settled, although the British Monarch (as he tells his Parliament) had been using his Endeavors for that Purpose. The Passengers tell us it is the Determination of the Court of France to prevent the Russian Troops from coming to America, and that General Howe can expect no Reinforcement of foreign Mercenaries this year. It is however the Wisdom of America to prepare for the most formidable Attacks. I am sorry to tell you that the Vessel which brought us this Intelligence was taken near the Capes of Delaware, having Goods on board belonging to the Continent, to what Value is not yet ascertain'd. We must expect Misfortunes and bear them. I make no Doubt but this Contest will end in the Establishment of American Freedom & Independence.

I lately receivd two Letters from my Son. He writes me that he is in good Health. The Affairs of the Department he is in, will soon be settled on a new Plan, when his Friends here say he shall be provided for. I have told him he must expect to derive no Advantage in point of Promotion from his Connection with me, for it is well known I have ever been averse to recommending Sons or Cousins. Yet I am far from being indifferent towards him. I feel the Affection of a Father. It gives me inexpressible Pleasure to hear him so well spoken of: I hope I am not, indeed I have no Reason to think that I am flatterd and deceivd.

In a former Letter you informd that our valueable Brother Mr Checkley was dangerously ill and his Life despaird of. I have heard Nothing of him since, although I have enquired of Persons who came from Providence. My worthy Friend Colo Henshaw you tell me, still lives, beyond the Expectation of his Physician and Friends. I did not promise my self the Pleasure of ever seeing him again in this World when I left Boston. But Mr Checkley was by many years younger, and in high Health when I visited him at Providence.

I have been told that the Law lately made in our State has been attended with ill Consequences, and that the Inhabitants of Boston were in Danger of being starvd for Want of the necessary Articles of living from the Country; but a Letter I have just receivd from a Friend upon whom I greatly rely, assures me that it is likely to answer the good Purposes intended. Pray, My Dear, let me know whether you live according to your own Wishes. I am very solicitous concerning you. Tell my Daughter and Sister Polly that I daily think of them. Remember me to each of my Family and other Friends. I am, your affectionate, SA

[P.S.] After perusing the inclosd, you will seal and send it to Miss Scollay.<sup>1</sup>

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> See Samuel Adams' March 18 letter to Mercy Scollay.



## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

[March 19, 1777]

Since our arrival in this City we have done very little in Congress. Until within a few days we had no Congress, & now we have but nine States:<sup>1</sup> the few members in town are closely engaged in committees, & what I write is done when other people are asleep. You will therefore not wonder should you find it very incorrect.

There are letters from Doctor Franklin in France of the 10th December. They represent a war in Europe as certainly imminent, & we have received a very particular mark of the favor of that Court,<sup>2</sup> which I am not at liberty to disclose.

You will see in the paper a Resolution recommending to the States to assess blankets for the soldiery.<sup>3</sup> This is absolutely necessary, because such things can not otherwise be had. In our State I hope it will be attended with no difficulty, because a great many families can spare one at least, & supply themselves again before the winter by spinning. The money should be paid in the Counties, & indeed if possible immediately on the valuation, because the price will not be worth the trouble of seeking after, & the individual might lose it. Whenever it is necessary to draw for money for this purpose, your draught on the President of the Congress will be duly honored.

Before Mr Hooper's departure it was resolved, that five hundred thousand dollars should be advanced to our state, on your warrant.<sup>4</sup> No such warrant has yet arrived: but some bills from the Treasurers have come to hand. I have consented to their being paid & deducted out of the above sum; because I knew that was the utmost amount of what was permitted to be drawn, by any means, on the account of our State. The treasury Board complain of these small drafts as being too troublesome, & wish you would order out the whole.

'Tis probable, Sir, the Assembly may make choice of some more able man to serve in this Department. I should be very far from deeming it an injury to me, & am certain it could be none to the State. I have resolved, very early in this dispute, to decline no service that my country require me to perform, altho' all offices are almost equally out of my way, & none are desirable to me. But if the Assembly should think proper to direct me to continue in this department, I hope I may be allowed to return to my private affairs, for a few weeks in the summer. If I have this permission, I promise, Sir, that I will not avail myself of it to the delay or prejudice of public business.<sup>5</sup>

Tr (Nc-Ar). FC (Nc-Ar). A continuation of Burke to Caswell, March 11, 1777. See note 1 below for the date of the present entry.

<sup>1</sup> To this point in the FC the present entry reads: "It is now the 19th of March and Since our arrival in the City we have done nothing. We had barely a Congress for a few days last week, but none this week yet."



<sup>2</sup> "Very particular marks of the favor of the French Court" in FC.

<sup>3</sup> This resolve had been passed on March 12. *JCC*, 7:172.

<sup>4</sup> This appropriation had been made on February 5. *JCC*, 7:92.

<sup>5</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Burke to Caswell, March 22, 1777.

## James Lovell to Unknown

Gentlemen

Philada. March 19th. 1777

The bearer Jeremiah Low tells me he is soliciting your favor, And, being distant from his relations & general acquaintance, he asks my testimony to his character.

I knew him only in a prison.<sup>1</sup> But his sobriety of behavior & his singular industry, in an accidental chance of working as a sadler there, have established in my mind a thorough good opinion & regard for him. I doubt not his late sufferings have served much to increase his former spirit to contend, in a military way, for the rights of his native country, against that tyrannical power which brought about my 6 months connexion with Mr. Low, at Halifax &c.

This testimony from a personal stranger to you must depend for any value upon your probable knowledge, by hearsay, of the persecuted patriotism of, Gentlemen. Your humb. Servt. James Lovell

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> For Lovell's imprisonment by the British in 1775, see John Hancock to George Washington, January 6, 1776, note 1.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror (No. 5) Philadelphia 19th March 1777

My Present Hurry will not Permit me to answer (fully) your several Letters which have come to hand since my last viz, 30 Jany., 19th Feby & 3 March, to which I shall pay perticular attention & answer you fully as soon as possible. My letter by Mr. Betten must have come to Your Hand very soon after the date of Your last. I imagine it is too late now to procure any number of masts. I think Your plan a good one & I shall endeavor to have it agree'd to but then it cannot be executed till next winter. Capt Miller was not arriv'd the 10th inst. I shall give you the earliest notice of his arrival, also of Capt Smiths.

We have been very unfortunate in the lose of a ship<sup>1</sup> a few days ago from France. She had got within the Capes when she was chas'd ashore & the people left her, the Enemy Boarded her & got her of[f]. Her Cargo consisted of Military Stores to the amount of about 6000 Sterlg. but the Despatches were saved among them is a letter from Dr Franklin of the

10th Decr. He had then just arriv'd at Nants where he was joyfully received & was to set out in a few days for Paris. Preparations makg for war all over Europe strongly indicates a General war. You may soon expect to hear of the arrival of 2 Fr. Frigates with some articles that is much wanted. The Report you have of a Packet is not true nor is there the least probability of any such matter, but in case there shod you may depend nothing less then the terms you mention will be *granted*.

Your very affte,

W W

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> The *Sally*.

## John Adams to Isaac Smith, Sr.

Philadelphia March 20. 1777

In an Hand Bill printed at Baltimore the 17th instant is as well made a Lye as ever I read. It is in these Words viz. "last night Mr. Charles Cook, arrived here in 12 days from Newbern, in North Carolina, and brings the following important Intelligence, vizt.

"That the day before he sat out, Capt. Charles Stedman, of the North Carolina Forces, a Gentleman of Credit, just returned from Charlestown, South Carolina, informed him and others, that he there saw a large French Fleet, consisting of 15 Men of War, two of them 80 Gun Ships, and 40 Merchant Men. That two of the armed Vessells lay within the Bar. That these Vessells had on Board 200 Pieces of Brass Cannon, 30,000 stand of small Arms, and a vast Quantity of dry Goods, for the Use of the American States. Their Destination was said to be for Delaware and Chesopeak Bays."

When you have read this and the inclosed News Papers, I should be glad if you would send them to my Family. You are appointed an Arbitrator to settle a Dispute between the Continental Agent and some others, for Want of a Determination of which the Public suffers. I hope you will accept this Trust, Sir, from Benevolence to the Public. I wish it was a more pleasant Office, but I think your Regard for the Public is such that you will not decline a dissagreeable service by which it may be benefited.<sup>1</sup> I am &c.

LB (MH*i*). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:180-81.

<sup>1</sup> Smith accepted the appointment after expressing his misgivings to Adams. He and his colleagues, Ebenezer Storer and William Phillips, reported their recommendations to Congress on July 28, and Congress eventually authorized payments to claimants according to their recommendations on August 11 and October 23, 1777. See *JCC*, 8:628-29, 9:836; Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:196-97, 263-64; and Marine Committee to Isaac Smith, Ebenezer

Storer, and William Phillips, March 21, 1777. For further discussion of the final settlement with John Bradford, see William Bell Clark, *George Washington's Navy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1960), pp. 203-24.

## Samuel Adams to John Scollay

My Dear Sir,

Philade March 20th 1777

I am to acknowledge your Favor of the 22d of Feb. which I receivd a few days ago.<sup>1</sup> The Act for regulating Prices, you tell me has made a great Convulsion especially in Boston. I am exceedingly sorry to hear that Dissentions should arise in a Community, remarkeable for its publick Spirit, and which has heretofore by the united Exertions of Individuals repeatedly done essential Services in Support of the Liberties of America. Is it indeed true, my Friend, that "Self Denial is a Virtue rarely to be seen among you"? How great a Change in a few years! The Self Denial of the Citizens of Boston, their Patience and long Suffering under the cruel Oppression of the Port bill was astonishing both to their Friends and their Enemies. Their Firmness and Resolution in that severe Conflict, and the Chearfulness with which they endured the Loss of all things, rather than the publick Liberty should suffer by their Submission, will be handed down to their Honour in the impartial History. God forbid that they should so soon forget their own generous Feelings for the Publick and for each other, as to set private Interest in Competition with that of the great Community. The Country and the Town, you tell me, mutually complain of each other. I well remember it was the Artifice of our common Enemies to foment such Divisions but by the social Interviews of Committees of Correspondence and other Means the Affections of the Town & Country were conciliated. Indeed this is no Time for angry Disputes. While the publick Liberty is in Danger, and every thing that is sacred is threatned, the People should, if ever, be in perfect good humour. At such a Time Citizens should not be over solicitous concerning their seperate Interests. There should rather be an Emulation to excell each other in their Exertions for the Safety of our Country. I confess I am not sufficiently informed to make up a Judgment for myself of the Utility of the Act in every Particular. Perhaps it would have been better if those necessary Articles of Life for the Supply of which you depend upon the Southern Colonies had been put upon a Footing with other imported Articles. As the Price of Flour for Instance is not limited in these States, I cannot see how it can be fixed at a certain Rate in New England without Danger of injuring the Importer, or altogether preventing the necessary Supply of Bread. The Committees of the middle States I am told are now met, and if they should agree to regulate the Prices of their produce it may put it in the power of our Genl. Assembly

to fix them at such Rates as to enable the Merchants to supply the Town without Loss to themselves.

I observe what you have written concerning the Supply of the Army with your Mannufacture. Such Matters are out of my Line, but you may assure your self I shall endeavor to promote your Interest as far as it may be in my Power, for I am, your unfeigned Friend, SA

FC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> John Scollay's February 22 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, NN.

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr.

Sir

Philadelphia March 20th 1777

I received Your favour of the 10th Instant by Mr Brown with a Copy of your account as settled by the Commissioners. After I Saw You at Kingsbridge I returned to Congress but tarried there but a few days. The day before I went home Congress agreed to augment the Pay of the Regimental Officers.<sup>1</sup> I Supposed they would consider the Pay of the Staff before they dismissed the Subject but it Seems they did not. Their principal object at that time was to establish a new Army. When I left Congress there was as full a representation of the State of Connecticut as the Assembly allowed to attend at one time. I was detained at home by Sickness some considerable time. While at home I received your letter of the 22d of October but could not give you a Satisfactory answer till I returned to Congress. I arrived at Baltimore the 2d of January when General Wolcott shewed me your Letter to the Delegates dated the 16th of Novr. with the representation you had made to the Commissioners of Congress in the Northern department. I took the earliest opportunity to move Congress on the Subject, upon which the Pay of the Staff officers was referred to the Board of War. On the 27th of January the Board reported as their opinion that Your Pay ought to be augmented to 75 Dollars per month which was agreed to by Congress. Upon which I immediately wrote to you enclosing a Copy of the resolution,<sup>2</sup> but I Suppose you were absent when the Letter arrived at Albany, as I understand by Mr Brown you have been at Lebanon about two months. There was also about the Same time a sum of money, I think 500,000 Dollars Sent to the Military Chest in your department.<sup>3</sup> The Board of War reported in favour of augmenting the Pay of your Assistants and some other staff officers which lies before Congress not acted upon.<sup>4</sup> I will move Congress to consider it. The Pay of your Assistants I am sensible is too low for the present times. I have had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with Mr Pierce. I know him to be a Gentleman of Abilities & Merit, and strict Integrity. Such persons I wish may always meet with proper encouragement from the public. A Deputy Paymaster General is allowed



6 rations and a Regimental Paymaster 3 by a resolution of Congress of the 10th of October last.<sup>5</sup>

As to what you mention of a neglect to give you information of the resolutions of Congress respecting the duties of Your Office, I am sure there has been no intention to treat you with neglect, or any disesteem of your person or services, for I believe you have executed Your office to as good Satisfaction as any officer in the public Service. The resolutions of Congress should be published monthly at least, for the information of all concerned, but Congress has not yet been able to procure it to be done. I understand by the President that he transmits to general Schuyler what respects the Northern department, expecting that he would give the needful information to others. Perhaps General Schuyler does not know but that the resolutions which respect your office had been transmitted to you from Congress, which I think would be the proper way. I have sent you Copies of some resolutions in time past but know not whether they came to hand.

I must do General Wolcott the Justice to Say that his not Complying with Your request in your letter of the 16th of November sooner, was not from any disposition to treat it with neglect, for he seemed really concerned to have the matter accomplished, but he was left alone, & the Congress moved from Philadelphia to Baltimore about the time he received the letter which necessarily occasioned the delay. I Shall always take pleasure in rendering you any Service in my Power, and especially when it will promote the public good. I am Sir due regards, Your humble  
Servant,  
Roger Sherman

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> See the resolve of October 7, 1776, in *JCC*, 5:853.

<sup>2</sup> See Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., January 30, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> Congress authorized \$300,000 for the deputy paymaster general on January 30. *JCC*, 7:75.

<sup>4</sup> Congress implemented the recommendation in a resolve of April 1, 1777. *JCC*, 7:216.

<sup>5</sup> See the resolves of October 10 and 21, 1776, in *JCC*, 6:862, 891.

## John Adams to John Avery

Sir

Philadelphia March 21. 1777

I had this Morning the Pleasure of your Favour of the 7th Instant,<sup>1</sup> and am glad to learn that my Letter to you of the Tenth of February was conveyed Safely to your Hand, and am obliged to you for communicating the Resignation enclosed in it to the Honourable Board.

It would give me a great deal of Uneasiness if the Honourable Board should not proceed for Months to fill up the Vacancy, if I thought as you seem to suggest that they would postpone it untill they should see

me, because the Public must suffer in the mean Time, and the Vacancy must be filled up after all with some other Gentleman. The Resignation you saw was the Result of long and anxious Deliberations, was founded in Reasons that will not alter, and therefore there will be no Change in my Determination. The Difficulty you insinuate of finding a proper Person, is merely imaginary. There is not a more suitable Person in the State nor belonging to it, than the very worthy Gentleman who now presides in that Court,<sup>2</sup> and other Gentlemen enough may be found to fill the Place which will be left open, by the Removal of him and his Honble Brothers, much more suitable to sit in that Seat than I am.

The Hopes you give me, that our Quota will be ready in a few Weeks rejoices me much. We want nothing but an Army now in the Field to answer our Purpose. I had this Morning the Pleasure of a Conversation with Major General Mifflin who assures me that he has Tents of the very best Quality, compleatly ready for an Army of 20,000 Men to take the Field, and that in three Weeks he shall have enough compleated for 10,000 more, that he has entrenching Tools enough compleated for the whole Army the whole Campaign. That he has Camp Kettles and Canteens enough, and that he has Horses, Waggon and Magazines of Forage ready. So that this Department, which was last year in so much disorder, which occasioned us such Losses of Men, Baggage and Stores is now in a good Arrangement, and promises more Comfort to the Army. We are making every Regulation in our Power in the Medical Department, and a fine Cargo of Druggs has arrived in Addition to a large Quantity before purchased by Dr Shippen. So that We comfort ourselves with Hopes that the Health of the Men will be better provided for than last year. In the Commissaries Department, I am informed that large Quantities of Meat have been Salted down, that the Men may not be obliged to live altogether upon fresh Beef as they did the last Summer, in the extreamest Heat of the Weather, which was thought to be prejudicial to their Health.

We are doing every Thing in our Power, for the Discipline and the Comfort of the Army. Nothing in this Contest has ever given me so much Pain as the Sufferings of the Soldiers in sickness, and for want of Discipline, to which indeed that sickness was in a great Measure owing.

You had good Reasons for your Expectations that We should have an hard Struggle with Great Britain.

Whoever has attended to the Policy of the British Court and Studied the Characters which composed it, from the year 1761, must have seen abundant Evidence of a fixed Design to subjugate America to the compleat domination of Parliament; must have observed how Systematically they have proceeded with all their Art and all their Force, to accomplish this detestable Purpose.

Whoever was acquainted with the national History, must have been convinced how compleatly their Government was corrupted, and the

Persons concerned in it lost to all the Tyes of Honour, Virtue and Religion: Tyes which once restrained that Nation: Tyes which alone can restrain any People from robbing and plundering all whom they think in their Power.

Whoever was acquainted with America knew how unprepared she was. How unexperienced as Statesmen and Warriours. How unprovided with Warlike stores. How defenseless in fortified Places. And what is infinitely worse than all the rest, how much infected with that Selfishness, Corruption and Venality (so unfriendly to the new Government she must assume) which has been the Bane of G. Britain. Every such Person therefore must have expected an hard struggle. Hard as it is however, it will Succeed. May *(divine Providence)* Heaven direct us and conduct us safely in due Time to Liberty, to Virtue and of course to Glory. I am dear Sir, yours

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Avery's March 7 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> William Cushing.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear sir

Philadelphia March 21. 1777

It is not easy to penetrate the Designs of the Enemy. What object they have in View, cannot certainly be determined. Philadelphia most probably and Albany. They have near Ten thousand Men in the Jerseys, at Brunswick, Amboy, Bonamtown, and Piscataqua: the two last Posts are very near their main Body.

I think, but may be mistaken, that they will not hazard an attempt upon the City, or Albany, before they receive a Reinforcement. If they do, they must evacuate New Jersey, entirely, because they have not Men enough to leave Sufficient Garrisons in Brunswick and Amboy, and march to Philadelphia, or to Albany with the Remainder.

It is the opinion of our General officers, however, that they will march within a very few days from South Amboy, through the Pines towards the Delaware. They are building Boats in N. York which may serve either for the Delaware or Hudsons River, or indeed they may serve to draw their Army off from Brunswick, by Rariton River, Brunswick being about twelve Miles from the sound between N. Jersey and Staten Island.

What Reinforcements they will be able to obtain is uncertain. Is it not more probable that they will bring their Army round by water from Canada, and join General Howe, than that they will come over the Lakes? From England and Ireland, they can derive no great Reinforcement. It is not known how many they can obtain from Germany. The Russian Auxiliaries are uncertain, but if they come they will certainly

bring a French War with them. But in all Events I think We need not fear any considerable Reinforcement from Europe before Mid summer. The British Troops here, are not more sickly than usual: but the Hessians are sickly with Pleurisies and other Fevers.

It is certain, that if they should march to Philadelphia and gain Possession of it, they have not Men enough to maintain a Line of Posts, by which a Communication can be kept open by Land with New York. They must therefore evacuate New Jersey, which would leave their miserable Friends in that State in absolute Despair, and the Whiggs already exasperated to a great degree, would assume new vigour. Troops in the mean Time will be coming into N. Jersey from the Eastern States and into Pensilvania from the Southern: and the Militia of Philadelphia and Pensilvania will not be idle. So that they must expect to be cooped up in the City and there perhaps destroyed, before a Reinforcement shall arrive. Besides this, they will be at such a Distance from New York and Long Island that they may be under Apprehensions for those Places. Another Thing, I think they will not choose to divide their Fleet so much. They will not attempt Philadelphia without a Force by water, as well as by Land. They must keep a large Number of their Ships at New York, to protect that and the neighbouring Islands, and many are at Newport. So that they cannot spare so many ships as will be necessary to come up the River Delaware.

These Reasons perswade me to differ from the opinion of our General officers, and to believe that no Attempt will be made upon Philadelphia before a Reinforcement comes. I wish I may not be deceived as this City by her central situation, Wealth, Artificers and several other Qualities is of much Importance to us. But if they get it, they will not find so much Advantage from it, as they expect. It will cost them most or all of their Force to keep it, which will make it a severity to other Plans. I am, my Friend yours, &c

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

## Marine Committee to John Bradford

Sir

March 21. 1777

We find complaints are made by the officers and Seamen concerned in the Capture of Prizes that have fallen into your hands as Continental Agent, for want of a distribution of Prize Money and it is urged by Mr Glover their Agent that you neglect or refuse to settle the accounts or to pay him the share appertaining to the Captors which puts it totally out of his power to make such distribution, and in consequence of these delays the Maritime service of the Continent suffers exceedingly, in short it



is owing to unhappy circumstances of this kind that the Navy cannot be manned and we now must press your immediate attention and utmost exertion to settle the accounts of every prize whose circumstances can admit of settlement, and if you have delivered any Prize goods for the Continental service produce the Inventories thereof with the receipts that prove the delivery to Messrs. Isaac Smith, Ebenezer Storer and William Philips whom we have appointed to value the same. The amount of such valuations you will charge to the Continent and Credit in the respective Account sales which will enable you to compleat the Accounts of all such prizes and you will then pay to the Agent for the Captors their proportion agreeable to the Resolves of Congress.

We must also remind you of our Letter of Instructions dated the 18th of October the receipt of which you acknowledged but hitherto have not complied with the Contents. We suppose it will be sufficient to inform you, we shall be under a necessity of requiring a Strict Compliance with those injunctions from all the Agents.<sup>1</sup>

We are sir, Your hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> For further information on this matter, see John Adams to Isaac Smith, Sr., March 20, 1777, note.

## Marine Committee to William Phillips, Isaac Smith, and Ebenezer Storer

Gentlemen <sup>1</sup>

March 21. 1777

Inclosed are several documents by which you will learn that you are appointed Commissioners to transact some business on behalf of the United States with the Gentlemen who were appointed Agents by General Washington for the Prizes taken by the fleet fitted out by his directions.<sup>2</sup>

The Marine Committee request you will undertake the said business and proceed in it with as much expedition as possible, The service having already suffered by reason of delays in that department. You will perceive that you are empowered to pay any balances which you shall find due to any of the said Agents, but as you may not receive funds sufficient for that purpose, we hereby empower you to draw bills on us for any Sums you may want to enable you to execute the Resolution and if you cannot conveniently procure money on such bills we request you to use your Credit to procure the same, & we shall take care to reimburse you as soon as we can know the amount, with all expences attending the transactions, and Interest for any advance if required. You will please to observe that the Captors in the above mentioned Fleet, are not in-

titled to so large a proportion of the Prizes, as those who have served in the Navy line constituted by Congress. You will be pleased therefore to have recourse to the Regulations made by Genl. Washington relative to this matter, and to subsequent Resolutions of Congress. We suppose that the Agents are possessed of Copies of the Regulations. Your well known Zeal for the Public cause has induced us to appoint you to this business and we have the strongest confidence in your dilligence & fidelity. You will perceive you are also empowered to value any goods which may have been delivered by the Continental Agents for Prizes for the use of the United States.

We are Gentlemen, Your hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Phillips, Smith, and Storer were all Boston merchants.

<sup>2</sup> See John Adams to Isaac Smith, Sr., March 20, 1777, note.

## Marine Committee to George Washington's Prize Agents

Sirs

(Circular)

March 21. 1777

Messrs. Isaac Smith, Ebenezer Storer & William Philips are appointed by this Committee, Commissioners to adjust the several Accounts of the Agents appointed by General Washington for the fleet fitted out by his directions, to value such goods as they duely delivered for the use of the United States and give Credit agreeable to such valuation, also to receive any balances due from, and pay any due to such Agents, and to require them to pay the proper proportion to the Captors.

You as one of the said Agents are required to pay due regard to the applications of those Gentlemen for the above purposes so that the same may be effected with all possible expedition.

We are Sir, Your very hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "To Mr William Bartlett at Beverly. William Watson, Plymouth. Joshua Wentworth, Portsmouth. Wintrop Sergeant, Cape Anne. Bartlett & Glover, Lynn Marblehead. John Bradford, Boston."

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir,

Philadelphia March 21st 1777

I was honored with your favour of the 10th Instant by Mr. Brown. Nothing very material has occurred here since my last which your Honr had not received when Mr Brown came away. Letters have been re-

ceived from Dr. Franklin of the 8th & 13th of December last. He arrived the 6th of December having had a passage of thirty Days. The Vessel he sailed in took two Prizes on her passage which were carried into France but as they cant be Condemned there they will probably be ransomed. Accounts from France are that there is Some probability of a war between France & England, but there is no certainty of that matter. General Green arrived here yesterday from Head Quarters & General Gates is also in this City and plans are forming for the next Campaign. I hope our Army will Soon be recruited so as to be able to Subdue the Enemy's.

Enclosed is a copy of the resolutions of Congress on the doings of the New England Convention. No opinion was given on what respected the additional Bounty to the Soldiers.

Mr. Hillegas remains yet at Baltimore. Your Honr's Letter to him being on the Public Service Genl. Wolcott and I thought advisable to open, not knowing but that it might contain Some matter proper for the Treasury Board to Transact and that might require dispatch. I shall take care to forward it by the first Safe Conveyance. I forgot to mention in my last the affair of the Cannon which Congress requested the loan of.<sup>1</sup> Some Gentlemen seemed much Surprised at the prices of 70 & 80 pounds per Ton as Some had been purchased & engaged here at £40 this currency per Ton. I understand the Salisbury Cannon are not so heavy as these, therefore the difference of price is not so great as was imagined. When it was proposed to borrow them, We represented that they were wanted for the Defence of the State of Connecticut and if lent, others must be immediately provided in their Stead, therefore we conceived Congress would not think Such a requisition reasonable—but lest giving So high a price should make a bad precedent & raise the price here, it was resolved to apply to borrow them. We gave as a reason why they would not be afforded cheaper, That the Furnace was rebuilt & put in blast at a great expence for the purpose of Casting some Cannon for the use of that State, The Scarcity of wood, the high price of Coal & the distance it was Carted &c.

Your Honor mentions that Colo Dyer and Coll Williams Chuse to come to Congress together, which will require Some Agreement. I have not heard Genl Wolcott mention any thing about returning home—Soon. I was last from home, but am willing to be relieved at any time when it may best suit the other Gentlemen to attend.<sup>2</sup>

I am with great truth & regard, Your Honor's Obediant humble  
 Servant,  
 Roger Sherman

RC (Ct).

<sup>1</sup> See the journals for February 12. *JCC*, 7:111.

<sup>2</sup> Sherman's colleagues Eliphalet Dyer, Richard Law, and William Williams took their seats in Congress on June 25, 1777. See *JCC*, 8:496.

## John Adams to William Tudor

Dear sir

Philadelphia March 22. 1777

Yours of the 16th I got yesterday.<sup>1</sup> If Howe imagines that one fourth of Pensilvania are Quakers, he is mistaken one half: for upon the most exact Inquiry, I find there is not more than one in Eight of that Denomination. If he imagines that 99 in 100 of these are his Friends, he is mistaken again, for I believe in my Conscience that a Majority of them are Friends to Nobody but themselves—and Howe will find them full as great an Incumbrance And Embarrassment to him, as We have found them to Us.

The Acquisition of Philadelphia would give Howe a temporary Ecclat, it is true, in Europe and America, but it would in the End prove his Destruction.

Beware of those, who make so free with the Epithets of "Sordid" "Selfish," "ungenerous" and "ungratefull." Let them look at Howe.

The other Colonies, it is true, contributed to Support the Poor of Boston. But for whose Good did Boston resign her whole Trade? For the good of all the others, as well as her own. And did not all the others go on with their Trade to their vast Profit, while Boston lost its all? If Boston had not, with a Generosity and Magnanimity, hitherto without Example or Parallel in America, resigned its Trade, and nobly Stood the Shock, Boston would have been the undisputed Mistress among the Slaves of America, and have drawn the Wealth of America to herself, and so she would now, if the States should Submit, because there is no other Place that the Crown officers of all denominations will resort to in such Numbers. There would be the most numerous Army, there the most powerful fleet, and there the whole Board of Excise, Customs, and Duties.

For whose Interest did Boston continue without Trade, and without Government, and submit to a trifling Force within herself? I remember a Petition from Boston to Congress, for Leave to cutt Gage and his Troops to Pieces, which was absolutely refused. To whom was it owing that all the rest of the Continent, besides Boston, continued their Exports Nine Months after all Imports were stopped? Whereby Millions were lost to this Continent—where to in all human Probability this whole War is owing?

I am not by this, however, justifying the Policy of Massachusetts in regulating the Prices of Goods, which laid them under the Necessity of prohibiting Exportations. But other States ought not to complain of this, because the continent is procuring supplies from N. England at one third of the Price which they give for the same Articles in other States. But they found they could not regulate the Prices of things without regulating Exportations. Because Persons belonging to other states were about pur-



chasing every thing at the stated Prices, and then exporting them at an immense Profit.<sup>2</sup>

As to the Mass. getting Money, it is all a Joke. They have lost their Staple by this Quarrell, which no other State has done—the Fishery, I mean, which has destroyed their Trade. The Privateers fitted out in that State, which have made such an Ecclat, belong to Congress, and to Citizens of other states, I suppose, one half of them and Besides, this Continent could not have carried on the war without them. Their Seamen have supplied the Army with most Things. Where then is the Ingratitude?

Dont be anxious about the Union. I have been a Witness to such Peevishnesses a long time. They Spring from Envy at Bottom. They see the Superiority of the Mass. to every one of them, in every Point of View, and they cant bear the sight. But the ill humour will fret away. The Indigo, Rice, Tobacco, Wheat, Iron, the Staples of other States, are not affected by this War like the Fishery, the Mast and Lumber Trade which make almost the whole Trade of the Mass.

For whose good has the Mass. sacrificed their Trade, and Privateers too by their Embargo? A Restraint that other States have not chosen to Subject themselves to, altho it is more wanted, both for manning the Army and Navy in them, than it was in her.

I hate disputes of this sort, and I never begin them. But when Mass is attacked, I never have and never will fail to defend her, as far as Truth and Justice will warrant me and no further.

There is a narrow Spirit, in many People, which Seems to consider this Contest as the Affair of Boston and the Mass, not the affair of the Continent. All that they have to do, is to wear genteel Uniforms and Armour, to get the Character of Heroes by their Bravery, and to be thought to lay Boston and the Mass. under vast obligations. For my own Part I think the obligations mutual. But if there is a Ballance it is clearly in favour of Mass. I ever disclaimed, in the most decisive Terms, all obligations to any state or Person, and ever shall. I will never solicit Charity or Favours, as a Politician, much less acknowledge obligation to others, who are under the strongest of all.

Are there not Persons who insinuate themselves into your Army, with a Design to foment Prejudices, excite Jealousies, and raise Clamours?<sup>3</sup>

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Tudor's March 16 letter is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> The Massachusetts General Court did not regulate the prices of goods until January 25, 1777. Earlier, on December 7, 1776, the General Court had imposed a general embargo on coastal voyages within the state and all shipping except that ordered by Congress, the Massachusetts Board of War, and the General Court. Finding this measure ineffective because of overland exports, the General Court on January 9 restricted the export of all foodstuffs and naval stores except by license. Massachusetts Council Minutes, December 7, 1776, January 9 and 25, 1777. DLC(ESR).

<sup>3</sup> Adams also wrote a brief letter this day to his wife Abigail inquiring about her letters to him and the health of their family. Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:181.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

[March 22, 1777]

I began this letter on the 11th instant, & it is now the twenty second (March). I will probably be some days before I close it, & if any thing occurs, I will subjoin it.

March 24th. A vessel has just arrived from France with ten thousand stand of arms, a very seasonable supply. We have some apprehension that General How will turn his arms against this City, & we are providing for his reception.

I have the honour to be with the greatest respect & esteem, Your Excellencys most obed, humble Servant, Thos Burke

P.S. You will perceive by the paper of 26th that the account of arms was overrated. I beg the favour of you to forward the inclosed.

Tr (Nc-Ar). A continuation of Burke to Caswell, March 19, 1777.

## Committee of Congress to Thomas Johnson

Philada. March 22d 1777.<sup>1</sup>

Your Excellency's zeal and activity in the cause of these United States gives us confidence in addressing you upon a critical emergency.

Being a Committee of Congress appointed to confer with Major General Greene now in this city, we find it is General Washington's settled opinion that Genl. Howe may suddenly attempt to gain this Capital.<sup>2</sup> We wish that the new levies in your State may be forwarded with the utmost expedition possible: so that they may either join our troops already in the Jersies, or at least be at hand to arrest the enemy at the Delaware, in the supposed attempt to pass it.

Our address to you in a plain narrative & wish is all which your character makes necessary even on this singularly critical occasion.

In the Name of the Committee, I am, With Esteem, Your Excellency's Friend & humb Servt. Daniel Roberdeau

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> This is the first known letter written by Roberdeau as a delegate. Although he later prepared an account claiming attendance from February 5, 1777, (the date of his election) to May 23, 1778, inclusive, there is no evidence that he attended Congress in Baltimore. It seems unlikely that he actually attended

before March 12 when Congress reconvened in Philadelphia, the day the Pennsylvania delegates' credentials were presented and entered upon the journals. See *JCC*, 7:169; Burnett, *Letters*, 2:lxiv; and Daniel Roberdeau's Account, May 23, 1778, Gratz Collection, PHI.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:175, 189, 191; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:285–88, 294–95, 299–300.

## Elbridge Gerry to the Massachusetts Board of War

Gentlemen,

Philadelphia Mar 22. 1777

I have just recd from Monsr. Pliarne the enclosed Letter, which he desired me to transmit without Delay as the Circumstances of his Engagement with your Board requires immediate Dispatch.<sup>1</sup> The Cheasepeak is not much infested at present with the Enemy's Ships, but how long things will remain in this Situation is uncertain. He seems to be very desirous of an answer by the earliest opportunity wch I wrote him should be communicated to the Board. I remain Gentlemen Very respectfully, your most obed. Sert,

E Gerry

RC (M–Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Emmanuel de Pliarne's March 22, 1777, letter to the Massachusetts Board of War, concerning the disposition of his ship, is in the Massachusetts Board of War Records, M–Ar.

## James Lovell to John Trumbull

Sir

Phila. March 22d. 1777

I wrote you by Mr. Bates, a few lines in regard to your manner of returning your Commission.<sup>1</sup> I was not aware of some circumstances attending your appointment, which have upon this occasion been Canvassed.

I shall not accurately enter upon a discussion of the propriety or impropriety of your resignation—but shall only, as an affectionate friend, give you this early intelligence of a number of facts, which will enable you to make a final determination in this matter.

The Commissions of several, enclosed in letters of less apparent resentment than yours, had been readily admitted for Resignation. Some very cutting resolutions had been made upon the insolent passages of the late Letters of Schuyler; especially on those parts which called for Stigmas on you or your brother. Immediately your Letter is opened, and by your friends committed, instead of the resignation being instantly accepted a favorable report was made, but overruled by a Motion to postpone the Consideration. Upon this General Gates sent in a recommendatory letter, explaining the circumstances of your Appointment. But this would not do. Congress is greatly piqued at the Style and Manner of

your demand, in a Case which will appear to you now, in the line of Favour, not of strict right.

You are to know that General Gates's power was in Canada, so that your appointment before his entrance there, was not strictly proper. Whether your first Commission was dated after any formal debate upon this point, I cannot say—but that and the late one were of one date, founded on your nomination in Congress, I suppose.

Every Member is entirely willing to accord you a Commission agreeable to the date you expect, but they are determined to lose even your acknowledged abilities, if they do not receive a different request from that now before them.

You were certainly unacquainted with the criticisms which may take place as to General Gates's power of appointment out of Canada. You were also unacquainted with the provocations which have been given to Congress for Attention to the Style of the Letters of their Officers prior to the Receipt of yours. General Gates is attached to you. The Congress admit your merit: and, while they are disposed to give you a Rank, which shall save you from all appearance of Demerit, they think that you yourself will judge the Commission more valuable for proceeding from a Body attentive to their own Honor.

No time will be lost by this Accident, if you determine to procure the Commission by the Method which I shall take the freedom to point out, because you may go on to act, from an absolute certainty to receive it by the first opportunity after your Letter shall arrive here.

To the Honb. John Hancock Esq &c &c  
Sir,

Since I addressed a letter to your Honor from Providence, enclosing my Commission, I have been led to find that I was mistaken in the apprehension that my appointment to the office of Deputy Adjutant General on the 28th of June (from which time I have acted) was so much in the usual manner, as to render that Commission bearing an after date, a decisive degradation, when compared with the usual practise. But the same desire of serving my Country in the most effectual manner, which has governed all my Actions in the course of my Adjutancy, since the day of my first appointment, leads me to be anxious that I may not be under appearances of disgrace, from any Circumstance in my Commission: as this would lessen my most vigorous exertions. Therefore I entreat that your Honor would move the Honorable Congress to favor me with a Commission consonant in date to my appointment by General Gates, assuring them of my Zeal for the Service of the United States and of my highest Respect for their Body.

I am &c &c &c

I do not affect to point out a verbal exact model for you; it is the Tenor only.<sup>2</sup> With something similar you may be sure of an instant com-



pliance here. The delay therefore depends on yourself; I hope you will make none. I am &c &c,

James Lovell

Tr (NNF).

<sup>1</sup> See Lovell to Trumbull, March 16, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Trumbull chose not to send a conciliatory letter. See *ibid.*, note.

## Oliver Wolcott to Andrew Adams

Sir,

Philadelphia 22d March 1777

Your Favour of the 16 Janry I lately recd. I was glad to be informed by it that you had got so well thro the small Pox, I hope your Family have escaped it, unless they have taken it by Inoculation which I hear my Family have done.

The miseries which our People who were so unhappy as to be Prisoners at N. York suffered, are such as nothing but British cruelty could have bro't upon them—but I hope the Time will spedily come when they will no longer be permitted to sport with the Distresses of Mankind—but as you observe our minds ought not to vary upon the Variations of Fortune. It was a Maxim amongst the Romans that no Man ought to dispair of the Commonwealth, that Maxim tenaciously adhered to, will always preserve it.

As to the Powers given Genl Washington, I trust no dangerous Consequences will Result from them, but you will Excuse me for Want of Time, from giving you a Detail of this Matter.

The Want of a Regular army as you observe is Very obvious, had such existed for six months past We probably should have been able to have crushed the British Power in America but I hope a respectable Army will be soon bro't into the Feild, so as that We shall no longer depend upon such adventitious Assistance as We have hitherto done.

As the Posts are again established to the eastward you have the common Intelligence by that Conveyance. Nothing very Material has of late Occurred. Howe keeps up his army at Brunswick, he would doubtless be Very glad to get Possession of this City, but I trust that he will not risque the Attempt.

My best Compliments to Mrs. Adams and my Freinds, and kindly accept this hasty Production, which at a more Leisure Time might have been longer, tho' that circumstance might not have made it any better. Letters which you send me are most cordially recd.

I am sir with Esteem, your most obedient, humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (PPRF). Addressed: "To Andrew Adams Esqr. at Litchfield, Connecticut."

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 22d March 1777

I have this instant recd a Letter from Dr. Smith of the 12th wherein he tells Me that you and the Children have been Inoculated for the Small Pox, and that he Apprehended you was so farr thro it as to be out of Danger, Casuallaties excepted, News which is Very agreeable to Me, as I have for some Time been much concerned least you should take the Infection of that distressing Disease unprepared. I perceive that Mariana has had it bad, he Writes Very hard. I am heartily sorry for what the little Child has suffered, and Very much Want to see her. If she has by this lost some part of her Beauty, which I hope She has not, yet I well know she might spare much of it and yet retain as much as Most of her Sex possess—but I hope the small Pox will give her no uneasiness tho' it may have a little hurt her complexion, as there is No Valuable and lasting Beauty but what exists in the Mind, and if she cultivates these Excellencies she will not fail of being beloved and esteemed. May a gratefull sence of the divine Goodness be deeply impressed upon my Mind, in that God has taken this Care of you and our Children, and for the Health which I am favoured with.

I am sorry that our Assembly had not repealed or so farr altered the Law respecting Inoculation, or that People from the Principles of Self Preservation were not laid under a necessity of Violating it. The Law of Self Preservation certainly will justify Violating a Law not founded on Moral Principles but of supposed Conveniency only, but no Laws ought to Exist which are merely political when it is clearly known that they will not be observed as Laws of that Nature are supposed to be the Symtoms of the Want either of Power or Wisdom or perhaps both. I was fully Satisfied in my own mind that the same would be the Effect of limiting the Prices of the Articles of Living. In my Judgment the most despotic Government that ever existed since the Days of Nimrod could never carry such a Law into Execution, but I have done nothing to Prejudice the Scheme this Way as it was adopted by our State. Tho' I tho't it was founded upon every Principle of Impolicy. But why am I eternally dabbling in Politicks. Would to God that the Knaves and Oppressors of this World would cease their Villany, so that each one might Return to domestick Injoyment, and possess unenvied that Peace, which cannot be had in any Other Circumstances of Life. I want much to See my Family. There are some Circumstance of a publick Nature which render my Return less desirable just Now than I wish it was—besides a certain Management or (I do not know what to call it) which I have Experienced and which I well know that I am to expect, there is a certain Volatility or publick Inflammation arising from Various Causes which I believe will not be in my Power either to Moderate or give a beneficial

Direction to. But however I shall Return by May or June at farthest and spend (unless Otherwise called upon) the summer with you. Indeed I have no Design of continuing here thro the summer. I think by next June and perhaps much earlier, the Veiws of our publick Affairs will be much clearer than they are at present, whereby a good Opinion may be formed as to the extent and Duration of the War. Govr Trumbull Wrote a Letter which was recd. about Two days ago, saying that he had Spoke to Cols Dyer and Williams that one or both of them should attend Congress and that those Gentleman signified that they chose to come together. As this has been now signified twice lately in Gov Trumbulls Letters I beleive those Gentlemen are in good earnest, and I easily comprehend why it should be so, but as I have not, so I shall not say any Thing to them upon the Subject. They will do what they think proper, the Time has lately been when neither of them would attend.<sup>1</sup> I suppose they are now willing I should attend a Service which they expect will be called for in Connecticut & which I fancy they are not Very fond of, and when I do Return I will perform that Service if necessary, without any Hesitation—and I pray God that I may enjoy a competent Degree of Health to carry Me thro it. I have no particular attachments to this City or Way of Life which I am in. If I can any Way serve my Country, My Family & Freinds it is a matter of great Indifferance to Me what my situation is—and I wish to have the unreserved opinion of some Freind wheither he thinks it advisable for Me to Return Home as soon as the Roads are settled or tarry here till perhaps the latter End of May or beginning of June. I have no other wish of my own than simply to do the Thing which is proper, just and honourable, and whatever that appears to be I shall do, and if I knew what was the State of my Family, Business, and Disposition or whatever else of the Colony, I can judge for the Rest.

Nothing Material has occurred of late. Many Think that Howe will make another attempt for this City, it is an object which he doughtless most ardently Wishes to Possess, but wheither he will have the Hardiness to Attempt it must be left to time to discover. My Love to my children and Friends whom I wish frequently to hear from. I am affectionaly  
yours  
Oliver Wolcott

P.S. I had recd. no Letters from Litchfd but this which I have mentioned enclosed in another from Dr Smith since the 20 Janry. which was also from Dr Smith.

My Compliments to Dr. Smith. Inform him that I have recd. his Letters of the 10 and 12th with Inclosures which I shall particularly acknowledge.  
OW

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr., March 21, 1777, note 2.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear sir

Philadelphia March 24. 1777

This Morning, a Vessell has arrived in this City with 6800 stand of excellent Arms and 1500 Gun Locks, belonging to Congress and 1500 more private Property. These last We have ordered to be bought.<sup>1</sup>

This News you may depend on, the Letters were brought into Congress, in the Midst of a Debate concerning a Resolution to empower the General to procure Arms wherever he could find them.

Thus it is. On how many occasions, when We have been unable to see any way to help ourselves has Providence sent Us an unexpected Relief! Thus it has been, and thus it will be.

I am, &c

John Adams

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Upon the receipt of this news, Congress immediately empowered the Secret Committee to "purchase such of the arms and military stores as belong to private persons." *JCC*, 7:197.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 24th March 1777

My last acknowledged the receipt of yours of 18th ulto and enclosed the dimensions of the 74 gun ship, since which have heard nothing of the brig Morris or ship Mifflin nor have I heard of the arrival of the schooner which my brother wrote me had sailed for Baltimore. Both Delaware and Chesapeake Bays are at this time clear of the enemy's ships, but a number of them are continually cruising on the coast, that I think it will be very lucky indeed, if some of those vessels do not fall into the enemy's hands.

The Betsey frigate proving leaky bore away for the West Indies and is safe arrived at Martinico and we are told by the Agent comes to a much better market than if she had arrived at Bordeaux—her cargo being in great demand there.<sup>1</sup> This is a lucky accident as remittance is much wanted there.

The money by Betton must have reached you before this time which I hope will last you some time. However I shall send you more as soon as the state of the Treasury will admit of it, in the meantime keep me advised of the state of the Loan Office and what probability there is of money coming in there.

All the Agents are instructed to send their accounts every three months which instructions have not been duly attended to. I hope my friend will endeavor to avoid censure on this score; the Secret Committee also expect that the accounts of every ship will be transmitted as soon as possible.



Perhaps you'll say you don't know what commissions to charge. In answer thereto whatever commissions you charge, you'll be allowed the same that others are, say 5 per cent and it is really of importance that the accounts should be duly transmitted. The newspapers announce the arrival of a French fleet at South Carolina. I think it highly improbable that there should be such a fleet, but I should not be surprised to hear of the arrival of some ships with the stores there mentioned.<sup>2</sup> We have been in great want of arms to put in the hands of the new levies and were this day considering of means to obtain them, when in the midst of debate on that subject, news were brought us that 11,000 stand and a number of locks was that minute arrived. This is the most lucky circumstance that could have happened. This vessel is from Nantz and had a long passage. She brings no public news nor have I yet heard of any private.

I am in haste, yours &c,

Wm Whipple

[P.S.] As I was closing this, a letter was brought me from Baltimore advising of the arrival of Capt Miller at that place—but no news of the other vessels.

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> John Langdon had loaded the *Betsey* with masts, spars, and planks for Bordeaux under orders of the Secret Committee. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:865.

<sup>2</sup> For further information on this false rumor, see John Adams to Isaac Smith, Sr., March 20, 1777.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

Dr Sr

Philade March 25th 1777

The foregoing Letter I have retaind for want of such Conveyance as I wishd for.<sup>1</sup> Your two Letters of the                      and                      of Feby.<sup>2</sup> I have receivd and have Time at present only to acknowledge the Receipt of them, the Bearer being just now going. I cannot however omit sending you the agreeable Intelligence that a Vessel arrivd yesterday in this port with ten thousand Stands of Arms. This is indeed a very timely Supply.

Mrs A will give you her Reasons, if you will ask her, why an Allowance should be made as soon as it can be done with Convenience for my Services. This I suppose may be done altho' any Circumstances should prevent the Adjustment of my Account of Expenses, which I do not foresee.

Adieu,

S A

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Adams appended this March 25 letter to his February 11 letter to Warren.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of February 2 and 24 from Warren to Adams are in the *Warren-Adams Letters*, 2:444-47.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris

Sir,

Philadelphia March 25. 1777

We are commanded by Congress to transmit Copies of their Resolve of the 13 instant to all the Gentlemen abroad that hold correspondance with any of their Committees.<sup>1</sup> The Necessity of Such a resolution and due attention to it, is fully evinced by the heavy expence America has been put to by many Gentlemen received into their Service, who have found it impossible to render themselves usefull for Want of the Language and we think this the most likely means to save others the charge and trouble of a long Voyage, as well as the mortification of being disappointed in their expectations. You will therefore serve all such and oblige us by discouraging their coming to America for Military employments.

We are sir, Your Obedt. Servants. By order of the Committee of Secret Correspondance,  
Robt Morris

RC (PPAmP). In a clerical hand and signed by Morris. Addressed: "To The Honorable Doctr Benjn Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esqrs, Paris."

<sup>1</sup> On March 13 Congress had directed the Committee of Secret Correspondence to write their ministers and agents abroad "to discourage all gentlemen from coming to America with expectation of employment in the service, unless they are masters of our language, and have the best recommendations." Nevertheless foreign officers continued to arrive in large numbers, with and without recommendations from the American commissioners, causing innumerable difficulties for the Continental Army and Congress. As a last resort, Congress began to pay for the return passage of European officers who were not given commissions. See *JCC*, 7:174, 177, 185, 189, 335-36, 8:406, 450-51, 559-60, 637-38, 721-22, 9:792, 875-79, 902-5. Several letters of recommendation from the American commissioners are in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:145, 176, 261, 265, 269-70, 304-5. See also Don Higginbotham, *The War of American Independence* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1971), pp. 214-16; and Edmund C. Burnett, *The Continental Congress* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1941), pp. 241-43.

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Sir,

Philada March 25th 1777

The great Importance of the Post of Ticonderoga, and the Necessity of having an Officer of Experience and Abilities stationed there, have induced the Congress to direct you to repair thither as soon as possible.

Their Confidence in your Zeal, Activity, and Attachment to the Service of the United States, gives them the strongest Reason to hope for Success from your Exertions in that Quarter. I have it therefore in Charge to direct, that you repair to Ticonderoga immediately, and *take the Command* of the Army in that Department.<sup>1</sup> Wishing you, with the utmost

Sincerity, all Health & Prosperity, I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Esteem, Your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (NHi). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock. LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:202. Gates did not retain this independent command for long. Soon thereafter General Schuyler came to Philadelphia in order to obtain a long-awaited congressional inquiry into his conduct as commander of the northern military department, and as a result of this investigation Congress resolved on May 22 to confirm his command over that department. This prompted Gates, who had expected to operate independently of Schuyler, to request permission from Schuyler in June 1777 to leave the northern department. Schuyler, only too glad to be rid of his main rival for command, readily complied with Gates' request. See Jonathan G. Rossie, *The Politics of Command in the American Revolution* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1975), pp. 142-53; and Paul D. Nelson, *General Horatio Gates: A Biography* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1976), pp. 78-88.

## Marine Committee Examination of John Grannis

[ante March 25, 1777]<sup>1</sup>

The Examination of John Grannis on the Subject Matter of the Petition of several officers of the Frigate Warren agst Commodore Hopkins and Papers therein inclosed.<sup>2</sup>

Question. Where do you live?

Answer. In Falmouth in the County of Barnstable in the Massachusetts Bay.

Qu. Are you an Officer of the Warren Frigate, and what Officer, and how long have you been an Officer on Board said Frigate?

A. I am Capt. of Marines, have been so from the 14th June 1776, was sometime recruiting, and have been on board her from Time to Time upwards of Three Months.<sup>3</sup>

Q. Are you the Man who signed the Petition against Esek Hopkins Esqr. by the Name of John Grannis?

A. Yes.

Q. Do you know the other Subscribers to said Petition?

A. Yes.

Q. Are any of them Officers of the Warren, and if Officers what Offices do they sustain?

A. John Reed is Chaplain and belongs to Middleborough, and James Sellers is Second Lieut. of the Warren and of Dartmouth, both of Massachusetts-Bay, Richard Marvin is Third Lieut. and of Providence, George Stillman first Lieut. of Marines, Barnabas Lothrop Second Lieut of Marines & both of Barnstable. Samuel Shaw is a Midshipman of Bridge-Water, Roger Haddock is Master of the Frigate and formerly was of New

York, and John Truman is Gunner and James Brewer Carpenter and both of Boston in the State aforesaid.

Q. Have you a personal Acquaintance with Essek Hopkins Esqr?

A. Yes I have had a personal Acquaintance with him since I came on board the Ship.

Q. Did you ever hear him say any Thing disrespectfull of the Congress of the United States, and what and when?

A. I have heard him at different Times since I belonged to the Frigate speak disrespectfully of the Congress, have heard him say that they were a Sett or Parcel of Men who did not understand their Business, that they were no Way calculated to do Business, that they were a Parcell of Lawyers Clerks, that if their Measures were followed the Country would be ruined and that he would not follow their Measures. I have heard him say the above in Company on Ship Board and Words to the same Effect on Shore. Sometimes the above was spoken of Congress in general, but more frequently of the marine Committee.

Q. Did you ever hear him speak disrespectfully of Congress or the Marine Committee before Prisoners?

A. No. I never was in his Company when Prisoners were present.

Q. Do you know any Thing about his Treatment of Prisoners?

A. I was on board the Frigate Providence when there [*were*] about Twenty Prisoners on board. They were called into the Cabin where I was and were asked by Capt Whipple<sup>4</sup> whether they would do Ship's Duty? They answered No. Capt. Whipple said it was his Orders from the Commodore to put them in Irons, to keep them on Two Thirds Allowance and by God he would obey the Commodore's Orders. They were sent out of the Cabin with an Officer, who returned & said he had put them in Irons. There were also some Prisoners sent on board the Frigate Warren, who were forced to do Ships Duty by Commodore Hopkins Orders, and he refused to exchange them when a Cartel was settled and other Prisoners were exchanged, but don't know that it was their Turn. The Reason he assigned for not exchanging them was that he wanted to have them inlist on board the Frigate.

Q. Do you know any Thing about a British Frigate being aground last Winter in the River or Bay leading up to Providence in the State of Rhode-Island &c and what?

A. I did not see the Diamond Frigate when She was on Shore in Jany. last.<sup>5</sup> I was then on board the Warren. which with the continental Fleet lay just above a Place called Fields Point. Commodore Hopkins went down the River in the Sloop Providence and sometime after he returned I heard him say that the People in Providence blamed him for not taking the Diamond, but that the Men were not to blame for they went as far as he ordered them, and would have gone further if he would have permitted them, but that he did not think safe to go nearer with that Sloop, for that the Diamond fired over her. I heard a Number of People who said



they were at Warwick Neck when the Diamond was aground there say that Commodore Hopkins was so far off the Ship that his Shot did not reach her, that the Ship lay so much on a Careen that She could not bring any of her Guns to bear upon the Sloop. And further I heard some American Seamen, who were Prisoners when the Diamond was aground, say after they were exchanged that the Ship lay so much on a Careen that She could not have hurt the Sloops People so long as they kept out of the Reach of her Small Arms. They also said that it was the Intention of the Enemy to have fired the Ship and left her if the Sloop had come near enough to have played upon her. One of the Seamen who told me the above was one ——— Weeks and another of them was named Robinson Jones, both of Falmouth aforesaid and young Men of good general Reputation.

Q. Were the Frigates manned when you came from Providence?

A. No. There were then about One hundred Men on board the Warren, and I heard some of the Officers of the Frigate Providence say that in last December they had on board about One hundred and seventy Men, and the last of February I heard them say that so many of their Men were dead & run away that they were then not better off for Men than the Warren.

Q. Commodore Hopkins is charged with being an Hindrance to the proper Manning of the Fleet. What Circumstances do you know relative to this Charge?

A. For my Part his Conduct and Conversation is such that I am not willing to be under his Command. I think him unfit for command, and from what I have heard Officers and Seamen say I believe that that is the general Sentiment of the Fleet, and his Conversation is at Times so wild and orders so unsteady that I have sometimes thought he was not in his Senses and I have heard some others say the same. And to his Conduct and Conversation it is attributed both by People on board the Fleet as well as by the Inhabitants of the State that the Fleet is not manned, and it is generally feared by People both on board the Fleet as well as ashore that his Commands would be so imprudent that the Ships would be foolishly lost, or that he would forego Opportunities of getting to Sea, or attempt it when impracticable. The Seamen belonging to the Columbus left her when their Time of Service expired, and went into the Army, and I heard some of them say that they would not enlist again into the Continental Fleet so long as Commodore Hopkins had the Command of it. The Character that Commodore Hopkins bore was a great hindrance to me in getting Recruits.<sup>6</sup>

Q. Had you Liberty from Commodore Hopkins or Capt. Hopkins to leave the Frigate you belong to?

A. No. I came to Philadelphia at the Request of the Officers who signed the Petition against Commodore Hopkins, and from a Zeal for the American Cause.

Q. Had you, or to your Knowledge either of the signers aforesaid ever any Difference or Dispute with Commodore Hopkins since your or their entering into the Service?

A. I never had, nor do I believe that either of them ever had.<sup>7</sup> I have been moved to do and say what I have done and said from a Love to Country, and I verily beleive that the other Signers of the Petition were actuated solely by the same Motives. Jno. Grannis

The Sub Committee appointed to take the Examination of John Grannis have examined him as above and report the same to the Marine Committee accordingly.<sup>8</sup>

MS (DNA: PCC, item 58). Written by William Ellery and signed by John Grannis.

<sup>1</sup> This document was written sometime after Grannis left Rhode Island about February 24 and before the Marine Committee submitted his complaints about Commodore Hopkins to Congress on March 25. See *JCC*, 7:202; and Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1275-77.

<sup>2</sup> Since Commodore Esek Hopkins' censure by Congress on August 16, 1776—for which, see Thomas Jefferson's Notes on the Inquiry into Esek Hopkins' Conduct, August 12, 1776—congressional dissatisfaction with his performance as commander of the Continental Navy had grown. After returning to his command in the wake of that episode, Hopkins further offended many delegates by failing to carry out cruises off Nova Scotia and North Carolina ordered by the Marine Committee in August and October 1776, by allowing the fleet to be bottled up in Narragansett Bay in December of that year, and by failing to destroy the British frigate *Diamond* when it was temporarily aground off Rhode Island in January 1777. But Congress' patience with Hopkins finally reached the breaking point after he came under attack by ten officers and men stationed aboard his own flagship, the Continental frigate *Warren*. As most of these men were natives of Massachusetts, they first turned for advice to Robert Treat Paine, a delegate from the Bay State who was then at home in Taunton, and around February 11 they sent him a list of charges against the commodore and his son Capt. John Burroughs Hopkins, which accused the former in particular of being irreligious, disrespectful to Congress, unprincipled, inhumane toward prisoners, incompetent, and an obstacle to naval recruitment. Paine evidently advised the discontented officers and men to drop their charges against Captain Hopkins and concentrate on the ones against his father. In any case, John Grannis, a captain of marines aboard the *Warren*, left Rhode Island near the end of February with a series of papers listing the complaints of the *Warren's* officers and men against the elder Hopkins, which he brought to Philadelphia and presented to the Marine Committee. After interrogating Grannis about these charges, the Marine Committee laid them before Congress on March 25, and on the following day Congress suspended Hopkins from his command. It is a measure of Congress' dissatisfaction with Hopkins at this time that it took this drastic step without giving him an opportunity to defend his conduct. After this it was not surprising that Congress dismissed him from Continental service altogether on January 2, 1778. See *JCC*, 7:202, 204, 10:13; and Edward Field, *Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Navy during the American Revolution, 1775-1778* (Providence: Preston & Rounds Co., 1898), pp. 162-76. The documents submitted to Robert

Treat Paine and to the Marine Committee are in PCC, item 58, fols. 225–33, and Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1167–68, 1234–35, 1265, 1275–77. Other contemporary documents dealing with Hopkins' efforts to defend himself against the accusations of his subordinates are in Field, *Esek Hopkins*, pp. 192–218.

<sup>3</sup> According to Hopkins' testimony in March 1777, however, Grannis "never has been onboard the Ship Warren three nights together, nor I believe ten days this five months past—and all that he can have against me as we are entire Strangers, is that after several times desiring him to go onboard and do his duty, as the ship was liable to be attack'd at any time; I at last threaten'd to break him and get another man in his Room if he did not—upon which he went onboard but staid only two nights." See Alverda S. Beck, ed., *The Letter Book of Esek Hopkins, Commander-in-Chief of the United States Navy, 1775–1778* (Providence: Printed for the Rhode Island Historical Society, 1932), p. 138.

<sup>4</sup> Abraham Whipple, commander of the Continental frigate *Providence*.

<sup>5</sup> For other accounts of this incident, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:845–46, 852–54, 891–92, 923–26, 959.

<sup>6</sup> The fact that privateering was more lucrative than Continental naval service because the former offered one-half shares in prizes taken and the latter only one-third was also a significant factor in the navy's recruiting problems. Beck, ed., *Letter Book of Esek Hopkins*, pp. 22–23, 29–30.

<sup>7</sup> See above, note 3, for evidence that there were indeed personal differences between Grannis and Hopkins.

<sup>8</sup> Aside from Ellery, who kept the notes of Grannis' interrogation, the identities of the members of this subcommittee are not known.

It should also be noted that on March 25 the Marine Committee approved three resolves pertaining to the distribution of prize money among the officers and crews of Hopkins' fleet, in response to a letter of February 14 from the commodore to the committee. The resolves are in the Nathaniel Shaw Collection, CtNIHi, and the letter is in Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1199–1200.

## Marine Committee to John Bradford and Leonard Jarvis

Gentlemen <sup>1</sup>

March 25th 1777

Inclosed is a Resolution of Congress in consequence of which, you are hereby directed to purchase, Arm and fit out for the service of the United states three fast sailing good ships that will conveniently mount not exceeding 18 Sixpounders on One Deck.<sup>2</sup>

If it should be necessary to take off, raise or lower a deck, you'l have it done, or make any other necessary alterations, you'l take care to have them fitted in the best and cheapest manner possible.

Advise the Committee of the purchase as soon as made, and should you not have public Money enough in your hands to execute this business, inform us what sum you shall want for the purpose.

These ships are to be commanded by three Gentlemen mentioned in the Resolution, Captain Jones to have the preference.

We would have the Commanders superintend the fitting of their respective ships. We are Gentn, Your hble servants



LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Bradford was Continental prize agent in Massachusetts, while Jarvis was deputy Continental prize agent at Dartmouth, Mass.

<sup>2</sup> On this day the Marine Committee also wrote a letter to John Paul Jones: "The Agent Mr. Bradford has orders from this Committee to purchase and fit out three Armed Vessels pursuant to a Resolve of Congress which is transmitted to him, one of which you are to command and the Committee have directed that you should have your choice, therefore you are directed to make your election as soon as the purchase shall be made, and to superintend and hasten the fitting her out for sea with all possible expedition." PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book, fol. 64; and Paullin, *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:89. In June 1777 Jones assumed command of the *Ranger*, a sloop fitted out by John Langdon, the Continental prize agent in New Hampshire, rather than any of the vessels fitted out by Bradford and Jarvis. Samuel Eliot Morison, *John Paul Jones: A Sailor's Biography* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1959), pp. 99-101.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror,                      No 6                      Philadelphia 25th March 1777

Since my last I have been advis'd of the arrival of Capt Miller at Baltimore. Mr. Purviance also informs me that Mr. Langdon has advis'd him of the sailing of the Friends Adventure from Portsmouth. I have desir'd Mr. Purviance to ship 3 or 4 bbs flour on Board each of these vessels for my accot, also 3d. Nail Rods if any to be had at that place, but I am inclined to think they are not to be had. As to insurance it is not to be obtain'd & if it was it is by no means worth Your while to import Flour for sale so long as it continues at the extravagant price it now bears here. If you have a mind to Risque one or two of those I have order'd in each Vessel for your own use, it is at Your Election.

The news papers from the Eastward announce the arrival of a very valuable prize, among other things it seems she has a great Quantity of Pepper which is an article that Bear's a high price here, say 3 dolls. I mention this that if you are dispos'd to speculate, you may judge whether it will be worth your while.

Many vessels are expected from France belonging to private adventurers in that Kingdom, & its said a private Bank will be establish'd there for the reception of our paper Money.

Yesterday while Congress were deliberating on the means of obtaining an immediate supply of arms news was brought that a vessel was just arriv'd with 11,000 stand, besides a parcel of Gun locks. This I hope will enable us soon to have a good army in the field and if Genl. Howe shod make an attempt on this City which its said he intends, I doubt not it will be the last attempt, for tho' he shod get possession of the City his Ruin is enevitable. A report prevails here that Portsmouth Dock Yard is destroy'd, but I very much doubt the Authenticity of it.<sup>1</sup> It is also said that the French Frigates in the West Indies have taken several British



ships by way of Reprisal for vessels taken by British ships off Martinico; however, these are only Reports. There has been nothing material lately from the Army every thing remaining much in the Scituation that they have been for some time past both sides preparing to take the field, and no doubt equally sanguine in hopes of Success which time only can determine. Your very affecte Bror.

Wm. Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup>For information on the partially successful incendiary efforts in England of James Aitken, alias John the Painter, and his connection with Silas Deane, see William B. Clark, "John the Painter," *PMHB* 63 (January 1939): 1-23; and *NYHS Collections* 19 (1886): 483-84, 491, 495, 20 (1887): 3-4, 6-11.

## John Adams to James Warren

Philadelphia March 26. 1777

There are two ingenious Artificers, here, who have made a beautiful Field Piece of Bar Iron. The Barrs were not bound together with Hoops, like that which was made in Boston: But welded together, and afterwards bored out. It is very light, it is a Three Pounder and weighs no more than two hundred and twenty four Pounds. It has been tried every Way, and has stood the fullest Proof. It has been discharged Twenty Times, and upon discharging it three times successively, as fast as it could be loaded and fired, with several ounces of Powder more than the usual Quantity, it was observed not to be heated so much as other Guns of the same caliber commonly are when of Brass or cast Iron.

It is so light, that it may be transported about with the utmost ease, by a few soldiers alone without Horses, and is therefore admirably adapted for a Regimental Field Piece. The Generals Gates, Green and Mifflin, have examined it, and admire it. We are about contracting for a Number of them. They are cheaper than Brass. They carry a Ball as far and as direct. The only Objection is that they rebound too much, But this Inconvenience is easily remedied by strengthening the Carriage. The Names of the Smiths who made it, are Wheeler and Wiley.<sup>1</sup>

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup>Adams provided a few more details about this fieldpiece in a March 30 letter to his son John Quincy. Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:190-91.

## Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull

Dear sir

Philadelphia March 26. 1777

I am favoured wth yours of the 10th & as far as Time will permit shall reply to the several Matters therein hinted.

With respect to General Arnold, he is considered by Congress as a brave & deserving officer, & had it been possible to have proceeded in the Line of Succession in appointing officers would undoubtedly have been promoted. This cannot be done without giving great dissatisfaction to the States that had no officers in the army in the beginning of the War; who claim a right to their proportion, agreeable to the Number of Men which they furnish for the Service, of Major & Brig. Generals. The principles of appointmt. are therefore reduced to three Heads, & a Regard will be had to each of these, "the present rank of the Officers, their Merit, & the proportion already mentioned," & upon the two first I think General Arnold will meet a timely promotion.<sup>1</sup>

I am informed that upon a report of the Board of War upon your Brother's Letter, Congress discovered a Resentment at the disrespectful Freedom expressed therein, & would not consent to give him a Commission of an earlier Date.<sup>2</sup> I think he had a Right to his Claim, but cannot altogether approve of the Stile in which he addressed the Legislative authority of the Continent. It is the fixed Determination of Congress to preserve the civil above the military, & the Authority of that will not be surrendred, should it be necessary to disband the Army in preserving the same. Your Friends will endeavour to reconcile the Matter, & if Measures should be adopted by your Brother to explain & set it right, which by revising his Letter might to him appear expedient, I think they will be able to obtain their Wishes.

Your proposals relative to a Q.M.G. cannot be attended to at present, as General Mifflin is desired to retain the office. When he can be spared, an attention will be paid to the Gentleman whom you mention.

I am glad to hear of your Success in procuring Supplies, & wish that Measures may be immediately pursued to provide Gardens for supplying the army daily with Vegetables, & also to procure large Quantities of Vinegar. Without these the Soldiery will be sickly & dispirited & the Service injured, if not ruined. Pray attend to them as Matters of the last Importance. Few Men can subsist upon Bread, Meat & Water. Your Application for Cash was immediately attended to, as the Treasury had recovered from the Inconveniences wch resulted from the adjournment to Baltimore.<sup>3</sup>

Your Application to Congress relative to your Salary shall be considered by the Treasury this week & reported to Congress as soon determined.<sup>4</sup>

I inclose You an extract from the Massachusetts Accounts of the Cost of the Fish exclusive of Truckage wch. was abt. 1/ per Quintal; the Quality of it is so reduced by age that the Board of War of Mass. may decline having any Concern therein, & it is left on my Hands; so that if the Enemy should not be fortunate enough to obtain it, there is a prospect of a miserable sale at the European Market. I am therefore of opinion that a high price will be allowed without the Charge of Truckage, but wish you to act disinterestedly in judging between the publick &

purchaser. You can receive Information from no other Quarter than the Treasury Board relative to this Matter, [as?] the State charged the Fish to the Continent & the original Vouchers are here.

6800 fire arms, & 1500 Gunlocks belonging to the Continent arrived here two Days since, & a number of Arms were imported by private Gentlemen in the same Bottom. I am informed 2 or 3000. General Gates is ordered to Tyonderoga. Mr Dean was demanded by the Court of Britain & refused by France. I am sir in Haste, yours sincerely, E Gerry

RC (Ct). Addressed: "To Joseph Trumbull Esqr. Commissary General at Hartford."

<sup>1</sup> Benedict Arnold was eventually promoted to major general on May 2, 1777, as a result of his role in rallying the American forces opposing the British raid on Danbury, Conn. But his prior seniority as brigadier general in relation to the five men who were promoted on February 17, 1777, was only restored in early 1778 after intense efforts by Arnold and his supporters, following Arnold's part in the capture of Gen. John Burgoyne's army. See *JCC*, 7:323, 9:981; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:234, 352-53, 10:324; and James T. Flexner, *The Traitor and the Spy. Benedict Arnold and John Andre* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1953), pp. 119-29.

<sup>2</sup> See James Lovell to John Trumbull, March 16 and 22, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> On March 15, 1777, Congress "advanced to Joseph Trumbull, Esq. commissary general, the sum of four hundred thousand dollars." *JCC*, 7:181.

<sup>4</sup> See Gerry to Joseph Trumbull, October 22, 1776, note 4.

## John Hancock to George Clinton

Sir,

Philada. March 26th. 1777.

As it is of the utmost importance that the fortresses in the Highlands of New York should be effectually secured, and that for this purpose an active and vigilant officer should be appointed to take the command there, the Congress have thought proper to fix upon you; being fully persuaded that you will exert yourself to render the forts and other works now erecting there fit for defence.

They have likewise been pleased to promote you to the rank of Brigadier General in the Army of the United States.<sup>1</sup> I do myself the pleasure to enclose your Commission, and have the honor to be with respect, Sir, your most obedient and very humble Servant,

John Hancock Presidt.

[P.S.] You will please to acknowledge the receipt of the commission.

Tr (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:202-3. Congress made this appointment in response to a recommendation contained in the New York Convention's letter to President Hancock of March 18. PCC, item 67, 2:33-34; and *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:840.

This letter to Clinton was enclosed in Hancock's brief letter to the convention of this date, which is in PCC, item 12A, fol. 167, and *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:397.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. March 26th. 1777.

I have the Honour to forward the enclosed Resolves of Congress, together with a Copy of a Letter from Colo. Campbell to General Washington. You will perceive from this Letter that Colo. Campbell apprehends himself treated in a very unjustifiable Manner (The Truth of which you will determine). At the same Time you will perceive the Sense of Congress as to the Nature and Intention of his Confinement.<sup>1</sup>

As it is a Matter of the utmost Consequence that Barracks for Prisoners should be erected in some convenient Place, the Congress have fixed upon the County of Worcester in the State of Massachusetts for this Purpose. You will therefore be pleased to execute the Work as soon as possible, agreeably to the enclosed Resolve on that Subject.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be with the greatest Respect, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

RC (M-Ar). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:179. Col. Archibald Campbell's March 4 letter to Washington is in *PCC*, item 152, 3:585-88. See also Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:207-8, 214, 235-36.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:173, 191.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. March 26th. 1777.

I have the Honour of transmitting such Resolves of Congress as have passed since my last, which are either relative to your Department, or necessary for your Information.<sup>1</sup>

The Congress have authorized you to proceed in the Exchange of Prisoners agreeably to the Cartel at present existing, or such other Regulations as you may think proper to make in the Matter, provided the Enemy will relax in their Treatment of Genl. Lee, and acknowledge him to be a Prisoner of War, and as such entitled to be exchanged.<sup>2</sup>

I congratulate you on the Arrival of a Vessel at this Port, from France, with eleven Thousand Stand of Arms in good Order, and I am informed, fit for immediate Use. She has brought likewise fifteen Hundred Gun Locks and a large Quantity of Flints. Six Thousand eight Hundred of the Arms are public Property. The Balance, which belong to Individuals, the Congress have empowered the Secret Committee to purchase immediately.<sup>3</sup>

I have wrote to General Gates to repair to Ticonderoga, agreeably to the enclosed Resolve.<sup>4</sup>



Colonel Clinton was yesterday appointed a Brigadier General in consequence of a very warm Recommendation from the Convention of New York. As he is an Officer of established good Character, and is now engaged in obstructing the River, his Station at the Highlands will be more convenient, and highly agreeable to the Convention of New York.<sup>5</sup>

Your Favour by Genl. Green was duely received, and a Committee appointed to confer with him, the Result of which shall be immediately transmitted.<sup>6</sup> I have the Honour to be with the most perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. Servt. John Hancock Prest

[P.S.] This moment Rec'd yor favr by Col Palfrey, I shall assist him all in my power.<sup>7</sup>

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves mentioned in the remainder of this letter, Hancock also sent Washington resolves of March 19, 21, and 24–26 dealing with foreign officers, General Schuyler, a prison stockade in Massachusetts, the decisions of councils of war, pay for aides-de-camp, army reinforcements, the appointment of an adjutant general, and the suspension of Esek Hopkins. *JCC*, 7:185–86, 189, 191, 196–97, 202–4.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:197.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:197.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:202.

<sup>5</sup> See *JCC*, 7:202–3.

<sup>6</sup> Washington's March 18 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 4:1–2, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:299–300.

<sup>7</sup> Washington's March 23 letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 152, 4:25, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:315.

## John Adams to William Tudor

My dear Sir

War Office. March 27. 1777

I had yours by Coll Palfry last night. General Green is just taking his Departure so that I can only write you a Line.

I blame you not for determining either to rise at the Bar or in the Army. I wish you to rise in both.<sup>1</sup>

It is a critical, and delicate Thing to give Advice to our best Friends, and therefore I hope you will pay no more Attention to any that I may give you, than just to weigh it and then follow your own Inclinations.

As a Lt Coll of Artillery, you will be in the Road to Promotion, and will have an opportunity of becoming great in the Art of War. You will not be obliged to give up your Rank or Pretensions at the Bar. This War will not last seven years—and if it should as long as that, you may shine at The Bar afterwards, as bright as if you had never been in the Army, and brighter too. A Military Character formed early in Life, and united to the Character of a Lawyer, a Statesman and Civilian, will not fail in the future Circumstances of America to make a great Man.

Crane is a brave Man, and in my opinion it will do you honour to get the better of certain Delicacies so far as to serve under him. As an officer of Artillery, you will naturally get acquainted with those sciences which are most Useful in War and I doubt not you will soon distinguish yourself, so as to merit Promotion.

The Branch of ordnance is most wanted in America and therefore affords the fairest opportunity of doing good and acquiring Fame.

It is not unlikely that the Pay of the Advocate may be raised but I can promise nothing, nor can I prophesy.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Tudor left the army in April to practice law in Boston, but he apparently did not resign his colonel's commission until 1778. The immediate circumstances of his resignation as Judge Advocate are unclear, and no resignation has been found. However, Washington's general orders for April 10, 1777, stated that "John Laurence Esqr. is appointed Judge Advocate, in the room of William Tudor, Esqr. who has resigned." Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*, 17:258-59; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:382, 11:144-45; and Tudor to John Adams, April 10, 1777, Adams Papers, MHi.

## Robert Morris to John Bradford

Dear Sir,

Philada. March 27th. 1777

I have your several favours of the 17th Feby, 3d, 6th & 13th March, and am pleased to find you are taking Vigorous measures to procure Justice to Messrs Hewes & Smith of North Carolina but I wish your Lawyers had particularly delineated the Powers necessary to be transmitted you. I will however inform those Gentn they must send you a Power & the President the same, by Powers I suppose you mean Powers of Attorney. I never received from you any Account of your proceedings respecting the Fanny nor did I know when she sailed untill this letter of the 17th Feby, nor am I informed to this hour either by you or the Committee of Salem what was done in the affair of the Sloop                      retaken from the Enemy with 70 hhds. of Tobo onboard. The Sloop Mr Hewes has advised me is returned to No Carolina but what is become of the Cargo he does not know. I have not time to look into the Copies of the letters wrote respecting her but my memory tells me the Secret Committee requested you & the Committee of Salem to settle with the owners of the Privateer that took him & then send her to Nantes or Martinico. I wish you wou'd Cause all the proceedings relative to that affair to be transmitted to the Secret Committee soon as you conveniently can. I wish you may have sent the Esther & other Vessells to Virginia as first intended; that Bay is now clear and the Cargoes ready. I have desired Benjn. Harrison junr Esqr of Berkely, Charles City County, to keep a look out for them and to direct them as they arrive where to apply for Cargoes, for we have several Factors buying Tobacco. The Tryton I

suppose will be sailed for Bourdeaux in Consequence of any former orders, and I am glad to see the dispatches were so soon sent off by the Schooner Lynch. The appointment of persons to Superintend the building of the 74 Gun Ship does not lye with me, these are Named generally by the Delegate that represents the State where they are to be built in the Marine Committee. I suppose you will not meet with any difficulty in passing the Loan Office Certificates now that the Interest is raised to six per Cent for I hope monyed men all over the Continent will put money into the Funds. You will find the Marine Committee have at length Issued orders for the purchase of the Mellish &c & that your determination to buy her will chime in very well with their orders. The seperation of Congress from many of their papers &c upon the late removal put things a little out of sorts and it is difficult to get the Committees properly into their gears again or to speak more properly, Members of Congress are too much harrassed & have too much business to do it as it ought to be done. The Brigt Lively I will very cheerfully accept off, and hope she will be fitted & ready by the time this reaches you, and I request you will put in a carefull, honest, sober, dilligent Master, agree with him on the Customary terms and let her be navigated in the most reasonable manner that can be. You will please to dispatch her immediately for Savannah in Georgia to address of John Wereat Esqr. Continental agent there, send in her the enclosed letter to Mr Wereat & if you can ship the Value of five hundred Pounds or thereabouts in Rum, Sugar, Wine, Porter &c laid in on reasonable terms, Consign the same to Mr Wereat for acct. of the Owners of this Brig. Mr Wereat is to load her with a Cargo of Rice for France from whence she must return to America with Salt all which I mention that you may agree with the Captain & he with his Seamen accordingly. I think he had best agree for their going to Nantes or Bourdeaux & back to a safe Port in America. It is difficult to get money transmitted; therefore I send you herein Loan office Certificates for four thousand Dollars, Nos. as mentioned below, which you'l pass to any Credit with the Interest due at the time of transferring them.

Carter Braxton Esqr agrees to be one third interested in the Brig's Cargo you are to send him; therefore you will charge him for 1/3d the Cost of vessell, outfit & Cargo and me for the other third. He requests you will ship a large quantity of Cotton & Wool Cards, they will sell well here, also nails of all sorts, some white sugar & mollasses but you must Insure his part & if you make the Cargo valuable Insure mine also. I am willing to Risque about 2000 Dollars value myself. Get the Insurance by good men & Cheap if possible.<sup>1</sup>

I am Dr sir, your obed Servt,

Robt Morris

P.S. Herein sixty three Lottery Tickets with five before amount to 680 Dollars being the amot of the bill on Mr Bache.

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> Morris also wrote Bradford the following brief letter on April 4. "I have yours of the 21st Ulto and observe the Brig Betsey was on a voyage to Baltimore but you dont say whether my Concern commences before that Voyage or after it is finished. I believe the latter will be most proper, therefore on her return you will charge me for One third of her & Colo Carter Braxton for a third. He will pay for it out of his part of her return Cargoes, and shou'd you think her Value lessened by the present voyage I dare say you will deduct accordingly.

"You will see by my last I had agreed to hold the Lively but if you buy the Active & think her more suitable for my purpose I shall be satisfied with either of them not doubting you will do therein what you think most for my Interest. The News from France is really pleasing and I hope it will be still more so before long. I thank you for your good wishes for the preservation of our City and remain in great hopes that we shall hold it fast & safe from the hands of our Enemies. I want to hear of Capt Cleavlands return." Robert Morris Papers, NN.

## Secret Committee to the Massachusetts Council

In Secret Committee of Congress. Philada. March 27. 1777  
Honorable Gentlemen

The present lines will be delivered you by Mr Cumberland Dugan and the design of them only to inform you that this Committee have chartered of him a ship Called the Roxbury, Nathl. Bosworth Master, lying at Dartmouth & the Brig. Abigail for which no master is yet fixed lying in Boston. They are both ordered to the Southern States for Cargoes we have provided on Continental account and as the public service requires our utmost attention to make expeditious remittances to pay for the various supplies wanted for the army from Europe we hope your influence will be exerted to prevent these Vessells being detained by any embargo or other restraint which will much oblige us & serve the great cause we are engaged in.

With great esteem & respect We are on all occasions Honorable Gentn.,  
Your obedt hble servts, By order of the Secret Committee of Congress,  
Robt Morris, Chair Man

RC (M-Ar). Written and signed by Robert Morris. Endorsed: "In Council April 14, 1777. Read & Ordered that the Naval Officers for the Ports of Dartmouth & Boston do permitt the within mentioned Vessels to proceed on their intended Voyages. Jno Avery Dpy Secry."

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

No. 7

Philadelphia 27th March 1777

I wrote you a few days ago when I inform'd you of the arrival of 11,000 stand of Arms, but find on a more strict inquiry that my informant was



Mistaken, there being no more than 6,800 but to make up for this disappointment, I have now the Pleasure to tell you that there is 630 Barrels Powder arriv'd at Maryland & you may soon expect to hear of large importations of this & some other articles which have been furnish by a certain Court. There is also arriv'd at Maryland two Prize ships loaded with Provisions Bound to New York, Mounting between them 24 or 26 Guns, several other Prizes were taken by the same Privateers which have not yet arriv'd. By late accots from Martinico the Genl. of that Island has commenc'd a warm dispute with the British Admiral & the Govr of Dominica, which our Agent thinks will not be made up, but daily expects a commencement of Hostilities on the Part of the French by way of Reprisals for some French Vessels that have been taken.<sup>1</sup> We have also accots via Martinico that Dr. Franklin was receiv'd at the French Court with all the Honors usually paid ambassadors, a perticular accot of his reception will be given out to the World so soon as authentick intelligence arrives which is daily Expected; <sup>2</sup> there is also an accot in a French Paper (which I have seen a translation) of the distruction of Portsmouth dock yard, that the fire was not extinguish'd the third day & that the loss was computed at one Million Sterg. By a private letter from Bilboa, a prize sent there by an American Privateer had been unloaded & the Cargo Sold, notwithstanding the Remonstrances &c of all the British Masters & Merchants who happen'd to be there.

I this moment receiv'd a letter from Baltimore which informs me that the two Prizes before mention were taken by the Sturdy Begger belonging to that place, that one of them is a ship of 300 Tons mounting 14 Four Pounders, the other a Brig mounting 14 three Pounders, that they were in Company & fought the Privateer 5 Glasses. There Cargoes are 1100 bbs flour, 500 Bags Bread, 3000 Bushels New Castle Coals address to Sir Wm. Howe K.B. That the same Privateer had taken a Brig loaded with Oats & a ship from Bristol bound to the West Indies loaded with Dry Goods which are not arriv'd. I have retir'd in the Midst of a debate in which I don't feel myself much interested, to give you this letter of Intelligence. If any part of which affords you Pleasure, my end is answer'd, and when you have an opportunity I hope you will give the like Pleasure to Your very Affecte Bror,

Wm. Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup>For the protests of the French governor-general of Martinique against the capture of French vessels by British privateers, see Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1088-90. An account of British seizures and French reprisals by William Bingham, Congress' agent at Martinique, is in *ibid.*, 7:1090-92. See also Whipple to Joseph Whipple, April 14, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup>For the arrival of this "authentick intelligence," see John Adams to James Warren, March 31, 1777.

## James Wilson to Arthur St. Clair

My dear Sir

Philada. 27th March 1777

I have been favoured with two letters from you since my Return to Philadelphia. Your Promise to write to me once a Week gives me great Pleasure [and] it will give me still greater Pleasure to see you soon. This, I have some Hopes, will be the Case, as General Gates is now appointed to the Command at Ticonderoga. I can more than conceive what you feel at your long Absence from your Family.

You particularly oblige me by reserving a Place for Billy Bird. As some late Difficulties are now removed from the Cartel, his Exchange, I hope, may soon take Place.

I have resumed my Seat in Congress. My Reason is, that if at *any* Time I can be useful to my Country, I can at *this*. Pennsylvania is still in the greatest Confusion. Perhaps Order may at last arise from it. The very critical Situation of public Affairs is of much Advantage to the Assembly and their Friends.<sup>1</sup> I shall write you more fully soon; and am, my dear Sir, Yours very sincerely,

James Wilson

RC (PPIIn).

<sup>1</sup> Since Congress' adjournment from Baltimore, Wilson had devoted more attention to opposing the Pennsylvania government under the new constitution than to Continental affairs. On March 13 he had written the following letter to William Atlee and Jasper Yeates from his home in Carlisle. "The Assembly, taking Advantage of the Weight and Influence, which those in the Opposition to their Plan of Government bestowed upon them for the Purpose of defending the State, and repelling the common Enemy, are now proceeding, in Abuse of that Weight and Influence, to establish their Power under the Constitution. It is therefore high Time that those who think the Constitution a bad one should rouse themselves. From many Accounts I am led to believe that the Dissatisfaction with the Assembly and their Measures is very great and general; and that a successful Opposition wants only a Beginning. The enclosed Declaration will shew you what Steps we are taking here. It is already signed by the most reputable Inhabitants of this Place. I could wish that similar Measures were adopted in other Places." Roberts Collection, PHC.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 28. 1777

"A Plott! a Plott! an horrid Plott, Mr. A." says my Barber, this Morning. "It must be a Plott 1. because there is British Gold in it. 2. because there is a Woman in it. 3. because there is a Jew in it. 4. because I dont know what to make of it."

The Barber means, that a Villain was taken up, and examined Yesterday, who appears by his own Confession to have been employed by Lord

Howe and Jo. Galloway to procure Pilots to conduct the Fleet up Delaware River and through the Chevaux de Frizes. His Confidant was a Woman, who is said to be kept by a Jew. The Fellow and the Woman will suffer for their Wickedness.<sup>1</sup>

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:188–89.

<sup>1</sup> For further information on the “Plott” and the subsequent execution of “The Fellow,” James Molesworth, see John Adams to Abigail Adams, and John Adams to Horatio Gates, March 31, 1777.

## Committee of Secret Correspondence to the Commissioners at Paris

Honorable Gentlemen

Philada. March 28th. 1777

I wrote you a few lines the 7th Inst. by Monsr Coleaux & sent you the News papers to that time; by this Conveyance I send another packet of them under Cover to Mr. Delap at Bourdeaux. There are only two Members of the Committee of Correspondance here at present, the rest being absent on leave.

Genl. Howe's army in the Jerseys still remains inactive, and greatly distressed for want of Forage and Fresh provisions which they cannot obtain in any tollerable plenty as our Army are posted all round them, have removed most of the Hay, Corn & Provisions that was near Brunswick and never suffer a Foraging party of the Enemy to stir out but they attack them & altho' they come out strong enough to drive our People from their Posts very frequently, yet it has always happened the reverse, for they are constantly driven back into Brunswick with considerable loss of men, Horses, Waggons &c. Their situation is disagreeable and for that & other reasons I cannot think they will be Content with it much longer, especially as desertion is become frequent amongst their best British Troops, the Grenadiers more or less of them come over to us every Week. You being at so great a distance may probably think we ought to have destroyed Mr. Howe's Army by this time, and so we undoubtedly shou'd had we had an Army to do it, but when it is considered that Genl. Washington has drove them from their Cantonements on Delaware to Brunswick & confined them there the whole winter, during which he has killed & taken between 3 & 4000 of their Men, 4 to 500 Horses, a Number of Waggons and considerable quantities of Stores, cloathing &c, kept them pent up in a place where they are Ill supplied with provisions & other Necessarys which has produced desertion, discontent & sickness, it will astonish all mankind to learn that he had not

during that whole time one half their numbers in the Field & the greatest part of the Troops he had, consisted of raw Militia that never saw a Gun fired in anger untill opposed to this very formidable army. It is now evident to all America that if in the beginning of this Contest we had enlisted our army for a Number of Years or during the War, Genl Howe cou'd not have wintered here unless as a Prisoner, but alas our army were disbanded by the nature of their enlistments when they cou'd have been most usefull & the militia are too much their own masters to expect from them a steady adherence to the extream Fatigues of a long & hard winters Campaign. They turn out for a month or six weeks, show great Bravery whilst they stay, but curiosity once being gratified & some feat performed to make a good Story at home, they become impatient to return to their Familys & neither perswasion nor principle can detain them. For this reason Genl Washingtons Army since Novr last has consisted every month of fresh raw hands, a constant shifting Scene of comers & goers, you might suppose him 10 to 15 or 20 thousand Strong by the Commissarys and Quarter Masters returns but never 5000 by the Adjutant Generals for he never had so many at one time with him. These constant movements of Militia and the large Bountys & high wages given them has hurt the recruiting service exceedingly for those that would have enlisted, by turning out as militia for a short time have got more money than their pay & Bounty as soldiers wou'd amount to & they are more their own Masters. In short the Systems adopted by Congress respecting the Army were formed without experience and have not been equal to what was expected from them. They are now & for sometime have been Correcting their errors, so that I hope to see a formidable army under wise & wholesome regulations in a very short time. As the General is now drawing all the new recruits together and as his hands are strengthened with sufficient powers I have no doubt he will do business with them this summer if the numbers raised are sufficient to Face the Enemy & this I am inclined to believe will be the case. The Garrison at Ticonderago will be strong enough to dispute the passage there with Mr. Carleton and if you do but effect an European War to employ the British Navy, this Country will become Free and independant in a shorter time than cou'd have been expected. I fancy Genl & Ld Howe have it in View to attack this City, they may possibly get possession & if they do it will probably bring on their ruin, for they will then raise a Nest of Hornets that they dont expect & are taught to believe very differently.

I am most truely Gentn Your Obed hble servt. Robt Morris

RC (ViU). Written and signed by Robert Morris.



## James Wilson to William Livingston

Sir,

Philadelphia, March 28, 1777.

There is great reason to believe that a certain John Curlis of Shrewsbury in New Jersey was concerned in taking at Bristol the packet from General Washington to Congress. I was one of the Committee appointed to enquire into that matter; and in that character think it my duty to write to you upon the subject, that Mr. Curlis may be apprehended and examined.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be, with much esteem, sir, your very humble servant,

James Wilson

MS not found; reprinted from *Selection from the Correspondence of the Executive of New Jersey, from 1776 to 1786* (Newark, N.J.: Published by Order of the Legislature, 1848), p. 34.

<sup>1</sup> Wilson's letter was undoubtedly enclosed in the following letter to Governor Livingston from Francis Hopkinson. "The enclosed letter is from a Committee of Congress, requesting that you would cause John Curlis to be apprehended and examined.

"Mr. Wilson is at present so engaged in the investigation of a dangerous plot, (the particulars of which I have wrote to Mrs. Hopkinson,) that he could not be so explicit as he could wish, and therefore requested me to inform you that the desire of the Committee is, that you would be so good as to have this Curlis strictly examined, and if you find sufficient grounds of suspicion, or any direct proof against him, that he may be forwarded to Philadelphia.

"The Congress have it much at heart to discover by what means the packet of Bristol was conveyed to Lord Howe, and to have the traitors brought to light. As I gave you all the particulars of this affair that had come to my knowledge, there is no occasion to repeat them now. Only this I would observe, that it will be necessary for you to have the evidence of Bassonet's bar-keeper at Bristol. But I fear Curlis has taken such good care of himself that he will save you and us any further trouble." Ibid., p. 56.

For the background of the case of the packet stolen at Bristol, see John Hancock to George Washington, October 28, 1776.

## John Hancock to Esek Hopkins

Sir,

Philada. March 29th. 1777.

I have it in Charge from Congress to transmit the above Resolve, which is so explicit that I shall not enlarge any farther than to direct, that you do not after Receipt hereof in any way whatever exercise an Act of Authority or Command over any of the Vessels belonging to, or in the Service of the United States of America.<sup>1</sup>

I am, Sir, your most obed. & very hble sert.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion of Congress' March 26 resolve suspending Commodore Hopkins as commander of the Continental Navy, see Marine Committee's Examination of John Grannis, March 25, 1777, note 2.

## Marine Committee to James Robinson

Sir <sup>1</sup>

March 29th 1777

Herewith you will receive Several Packets for Wm. Bingham Esqr. at Martinico, they are of great consequence and must not on any account fall into the Hands of the enemy, therefore have them slung ready for Sinking in case of danger. Should you fall in with the Islands so as to make it convenient for landing these Letters at Martinico send an officer on shore with them. He must deliver them himself and bring Mr Bingham's receipt for them. If you cannot land them going to St. Eustatia, you must either send them from thence to Martinico by one of your officers or some person Mr. Curson can depend upon who must go passenger in a Dutch or French Vessel & bring you back a receipt, or else you must after landing the Indico at St Eustatia run over with the Sachem and deliver them yourself.<sup>2</sup>

I am, Sir, Your obed. servant per Order      Robt Morris V.P.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Robinson was captain of the Continental sloop *Sachem*.

<sup>2</sup> On this day the Marine Committee wrote another letter over Morris' signature to William Bingham, Congress' agent in Martinique: "The several Packets sent herewith were intended to be conveyed to you by the Randolph Frigate. They were sent out to sea after him by a small continental sloop which has been cruising in the proper station for her since the Middle of Feby.

"But it seems the Randolph carried away one of her Masts soon after she left this Port and put into Charles Town to refit, therefore I send these down after the Sachem, Capt. Robinson, bound for St. Eustatia from whence he must carefully forward them to you." Ibid., fol. 64; and Paullin, *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:90.

## John Adams to Charles Adams

Philadelphia March 30 1777

Yesterday, I took a Walk upon the Wharves, to see the Navigation. The new Frigate called The Delaware, is hawled off, into the stream and is ready to sail. Captain Alexander is to command her. She makes a fine Appearance. I then went to the House of one Humphreys an ingenious shipwright and found him making a Model of a seventy four Gun Ship. He has nearly compleated it. You see every Part of the Ship, in its just Proportion in Miniature. After this Model the new seventy four Gun Ships are to be built, one at Portsmouth, one at Boston and one here.

I then went to the Foundry of brass Cannon. It is in Front street in Southwark, nearly opposite to the Sweedes Church. This Building was formerly a China Manufactory, but is now converted into a Foundry, under the direction of Mr. Biers [Byers], late of New York. Here is an Air furnace, in which they melt the Metal. There is a great deep Cavern dugg in the Ground in which they place the Mould into which they pour the melted Metal, and thus they cast the Gun in a perpendicular Position. Several brass six Pounders newly cast, were lying there, and several old ones, to be cast over.

There is another Man, one King, who lives in Front street, at the Corner of Norris's Alley, who cast Patterara's and Howitzers.

Thus you see, that a Foundation is laying, in Arts, and Manufactures, of a rising State. May you enjoy the Fruits of it, in greater Tranquility of Mind, than your Father has enjoyed, while it is laying.<sup>1</sup>

LB (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:190.

<sup>1</sup> This day Adams also wrote a letter to his daughter, Abigail, describing a service of Rev. William Marshall at the Scots' Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. *Ibid.*, p. 189.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir Philadelphia March 30th. 1777

Agreeable to the Directions in your Letter by Messrs. Greene & Howell I have exerted myself to the utmost of my Power, and have been happy enough, by the kind Offices of the President and others, in Consequence of my Application, to procure a very great Part of the Ballance due to the State of Rhode Island &c which I wish may go safe to our Treasury. The Commissioners will inform you into the unhappy Cause of their Detention; they will also acquaint you with the Monies they paid Messrs Purviances out of the Monies received from the Treasurer in Baltimore, and when it was expected that Capt. Coffin would sail, and with every Article of Intelligence. If the Monies paid by them to the Purviances should not amount to the Ballance of their Account, I shall improve that Circumstance to obtain a Resolve for and an additional Sum and take the Money along with Me, if I can, when I return to our State.<sup>1</sup>

I should be exceedingly glad if the Genl. Assembly would chuse a Delegate early in the first Session after they receive this, and give immediate Notice of their Appointment, by transmitting a Copy of their Resolve on that Head to their Delegates in Congress; because after the Expiration of the Time for which I was appointed I cannot take a Seat in Congress; And I mean to continue here until I am made acquainted with their Appointment; for if I should not be rechosen I shall take Home

with me all my Baggage; only a Part of which I shall be obliged to carry backwards & forwards; if I should be honoured with a Reappointment.<sup>2</sup>

It is the Observation of an Author, well acquainted with human Nature that the least a Man says in his own Praise, is still too much. I will therefore only observe in my own behalf, that if I have not discharged my Duty hitherto so well as I ought to have done it hath not been owing to a Want of Attention to it; and that if the State of Rhode Island should think proper to honor me with a Reappointment they may rely on my most strenuous Endeavours in its Service.

The Liberty of America I hold dearer than my Life, and shall always feel a Satisfaction amidst any Sacrifice of Ease and domestick Comfort I may make, when I can contribute towards its Establishment, and the Prosperity and Happiness of the State of Rhode Island &c.

With the warmest Wishes for both, if they do not involve each other, and for your Honor's Health & Felicity I continue to be with the greatest Consideration and Esteem, Yor Honor's most obedt hble Servt.

William Ellery

P.S. The Delegate to be chosen will I suppose be chosen for a year, the year to commence at the Expiration of the Time for which I was appointed.

W.E.

I have delivered the Loan-Office Certificate for sixty thousand Dollars to the Commissioners. It is endorsed to you, Sir, for the Use of the State.

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> See Ellery to Cooke, March 6, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> Under the terms of a March 1777 act of the Rhode Island Assembly, on April 16 the freemen of the state elected Ellery, Stephen Hopkins, and Henry Marchant to represent them in Congress for one year, and on May 7 the assembly authorized Governor Cooke to issue commissions for them to serve in this capacity. John R. Bartlett, ed., *Records of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, vols. 8-10 (Providence: Cooke, Jackson, & Co., 1863-65), 8:179, 220, 223-24.

## John Hancock to William Aylett

Sir,

Philada. March 30th. 1777.

The enclosed Copy of the Resolves of Congress relative to your Department will inform you that your Favour of the 14th Inst was laid before them, and of the Steps taken in Consequence thereof. You will perceive the Sense of Congress so clearly conveyed in those Resolves, that it is unnecessary to add any Thing.<sup>1</sup> I shall therefore only request that you will exert yourself to comply with them as soon as possible. I am, Sir, your most obed. Sert.

J. H. Presid.



LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Mr. Aylett Depy Commissy. Genl. in Virginia."

<sup>1</sup>On March 29 Congress had authorized Aylett to purchase provisions of corn and flour for the army. *JCC*, 7:208-9.

## John Hancock to the Delaware Governor and Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. March 30th. 1777.

The Necessity of complying with the above Resolve for the Purposes therein mentioned is so extremely apparent, that I need not make Use of Arguments to induce you to carry the same into Execution as soon as possible.<sup>1</sup> I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. Ser,

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup>For the March 26 resolve urging Delaware to place a guard at Lewes "to protect the persons employed as pilots, and such property of the good subjects of these States as shall be thrown upon their or the adjacent coasts, see *JCC*, 7:203. See also Hancock to Henry Fisher, April 7, 1777.

## John Hancock to the Virginia Governor and Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. March 30th. 1777.

I am commanded by Congress to transmit the inclosed Resolve & Copy of a Letter from Colo. Morgan, to which I beg Leave to refer your attention. Should you have taken any Measures agt. Pluggy's People in Consequence of a former Resolve, I am to request you will immediately issue Orders that all further operations may be suspended until you shall hear again from Congress on the Subject.<sup>1</sup> I have the Honour to be Gentlemen, your most obed. Sert.

J H Presid

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup>On February 27 Congress had advised Governor Henry and the Virginia Council "to consider of the propriety of ordering an expedition from the western frontier of that State against the Indians west of the river Ohio, commonly known by the name of Pluggy's town." In view of the "repeated" attacks by these Indians on Virginia citizens, the Virginia state authorities decided on March 12 to mount a punitive expedition against them. Without being aware of this decision at the time, George Morgan, a congressional Indian agent in the middle department, wrote a letter to Hancock on the 15th warning that any retaliatory raid might precipitate a general Indian war on the frontier. Congress took this admonition to heart and on March 25 passed a resolve, which Hancock enclosed

in the present letter to Henry, advising a suspension of any operations against "the gang of Indians, commonly called Pluggy's people." Morgan and John Nevill, a Virginia militia officer stationed with him at Fort Pitt, explained in an April 1 letter to Henry, "we apprehend the inevitable consequence of this Expedition will be a general Indian War, which we are persuaded it is the Interest of the State at this time to avoid." As a result, the governor cancelled the expedition on April 12. See *JCC*, 7:166-67, 201; *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:258-61, 286-88; Reuben G. Thwaites and Louise P. Kellogg, eds., *The Revolution on the Upper Ohio, 1775-1777* (Madison, Wis.: Democrat Printing Co., 1908), pp. 247-48; and Max Savelle, *George Morgan: Colony Builder* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1932), pp. 141-44. The March 15 letter from Morgan to Hancock that the President also sent to Henry is in Joseph H. Bausman, *History of Beaver County Pennsylvania and Its Centennial Celebration*, 2 vols. (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1904), 1:69.

## Joseph Hewes to Richard Caswell

Dr sir

Edenton 30th March 1777

You will no doubt be surprised to find that I am still in Carolina. I fully intended to have set out for the Congress in Feb'y, but I have been so much indisposed almost ever since I left Halifax, great part of the time with the rheumatism, that I did not think it prudent to engage with a more Northern climate lest I should be laid up on the road, & be useless to the public & to my own private concerns. I am now getting much better & should have set out about this time had I not lately received some letters from Mr Morris<sup>1</sup> Chairman of the Secret Committee of Congress, requesting me to dispatch two vessels that are now loading here with tobacco on Continental account & bound for Nantes in old France. He says remittances are much wanted, & strongly urges the necessity of getting more vessels to go the same voyage. As I am a member of that Committee, & privy to most of their transactions, & am now already doing their business, I am almost as much in the way of my duty as if I was at Congress.<sup>2</sup> If I was there, much of my time would be taken up in loading & chartering vessels. There are but few merchants in that Assembly, which makes that kind of business fall heavy on Mr Morris & myself. These circumstances I thought proper to mention to your Excellency, lest you should think me tardy. I want two vessels now for Continental service, one to go to old France, the other to Martinico. They are not to be had here on charter, & I have no power to purchase any on Continental account. Would it not be advisable for this State to purchase two or three good vessels & hire them to me for the above service. I have power to give high wages for suitable vessels & to insure them. This plan would greatly serve the public cause, & could not be attended with any loss to this State. If any other method could be hit upon by which I could be furnished, I should be exceedingly glad to have your Excellency's influences to expedite it.

I am with great respect & esteem, Your Excellency's most obed. hum. servant,

Joseph Hewes

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> No letters from Robert Morris to Hewes have been found.

<sup>2</sup> Hewes' sedulous application to Secret Committee business had the ironic effect of costing him his seat in Congress. When the North Carolina Assembly elected a new group of delegates on April 28, 1777, it left out Hewes. As William Hooper explained in a letter to Robert Morris written at Cape Fear on May 27: "Yes! My Dear Sir, thus long and faithful publick services are requited. Hewes has lost his election, the charge against him was too futile to be repeated except to be despised—"That he was employed loading vessels for the Secret Committee and receiving commissions as a merchant when he ought to have been at Congress as a delegate,' tho' by the by an excruciating fit of the Rheumatism incapacitated him for the . . . & as you well know it was in obedience to the earnest requisition of the Secret Committee by you their Representative that he was employed on this very necessary business. It was lucky that Hewes had not begun his journey or his removal might have been announced to him on the road or in the exercise of his delegatorial function in Congress. I wish our Assembly may be convinced of their error. I imagine that such a certificate in Mr. Hewes's favour as you could draw subscribed by all the members who served with him and know his integrity and usefulness would have an effect which as his friend I wish to promote. Should this be your opinion when you have effected it forward it to me. I was again appointed a delegate, the situation of my own private affairs, the importunity of my wife and little ones, that delicacy which I felt as a friend did not leave me a moment in suspense whether I should decline the honour intended me, & to you who feel the full force of conjugal and paternal affection, and are all alive to the wrongs done your friends sure I am I stand justified. As it deprives me of your agreeable society and that of others it has its melancholy reflections, but as it furnishes me with a consciousness of having done my duty, I endeavour to suppress them and look forward to a future opportunity when I may be restored to you without violating the respect which I owe to my family and connections." *NYHS Collections* 11 (1878): 427-28. Hooper, who was elected a member of the state's new delegation in Congress, resigned this office on May 1 and was replaced by Cornelius Harnett the following day. *N.C. State Records*, 12:45, 59, 65. In the same letter Hooper commended Harnett to Morris as "a judicious man, and a sensible agreeable companion. He has acquired a fortune and is somewhat conversant with trade. He will be useful on some of your Mercantile committees. I beg your notice of him. He has a high opinion of our friend S. Adams and my Countrymen in general having been formerly acquainted in Boston." *NYHS Collections* 11 (1878): 430.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia March 31. 1777

I know not the Time, when I have omitted to write you, so long. I have received but three Letters from you, since We parted, and these were short ones. Do you write by the Post? If you do there must have been some Legerdemain. The Post comes now constantly once a Week, and brings me News Papers, but no Letters. I have ventured to write by

the Post, but whether my Letters are received or not, I dont know. If you distrust the Post, the Speaker or your Unkle Smith will find frequent Opportunities of conveying Letters.

I never was more desirous of hearing frequently from Home, and never before heard so seldom. We have Reports here, not very favourable to the Town of Boston. It is said that Dissipation prevails and that Toryism abounds, and is openly avowed at the Coffee Houses. I hope the Reports are false. Apostacies in Boston are more abominable than in any other Place. Toryism finds worse Quarter here. A poor fellow, detected here as a Spy, employed as he confesses by Lord Howe and Mr. Galloway to procure Pilots for Delaware River, and for other Purposes, was this day at Noon, executed on the Gallows in the Presence of an immense Crowd of Spectators. His Name was James Molesworth. He has been Mayors Clerk to three or four Mayors.

I believe you will think my Letters, very trifling. Indeed they are. I write in Trammells. Accidents have thrown so many Letters into the Hands of the Enemy, and they take such a malicious Pleasure, in exposing them, that I choose they should have nothing but Trifles from me to expose. For this Reason I never write any Thing of Consequence from Europe, from Philadelphia, from Camp, or any where else. If I could write freely I would lay open to you, the whole system of Politics and War, and would delineate all the Characters in Either Drama, as minutely, altho I could not do it, so elegantly, as Tully did in his Letters to Atticus.

We have Letters however from France by a Vessel in at Portsmouth—of her important Cargo you have heard. There is News of very great Importance in the Letters, but I am not at Liberty. The News, however, is very agreeable.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:192.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir

Philadelphia March 31. 1777

We have this day received Letters from Europe, of an interesting Nature. We are under Injunctions of Silence, concerning one very important Point: and indeed I dont know how far I am at Liberty, concerning Some others: but thus much I may venture to communicate: <sup>1</sup> That We have an offer of three Millions of Livres in Specie, without Interest, and to be paid when We shall be Settled in Peace and Independence. That all Europe wish us well, excepting only Portugal and Russia. That all the Ports of France and Spain, and Italy, and all the



Ports in the Mediterranean, excepting Portugal, are open to our Privateers and Merchant Ships. That there is no danger of our wanting Arms, or Ammunition for the future—between Six and seven hundred Barrells of Powder having arrived in Maryland, and indeed We had plenty of Powder before. In Short, my Friend, altho We have many grievous Things to bear, and shall have more; yet there is nothing wanting but Patience. Patience and Perseverance will carry Us through this mighty Enterprise. An Enterprise that is and will be an Astonishment to vulgar Minds, all over the World, in this and in future Generations. An Enterprise however, which Faithfullness to our Ancestors, who have sett Us Examples of Resistance to Tyranny, Faithfullness to the present and future Generations, whose Freedom depends upon it, laid us under every moral and religious obligation to undertake.

Our accounts from Europe are that great Preparations are making for war, and that every Thing tends to that object: but when or where, or how Hostilities will commence is yet unknown. France and Spain will act in concert and with perfect Amity. Neither will take any step without the other.

The American Ministers abroad, advise Us to exert ourselves in every Respect, as if We were to receive no Assistance from abroad. This is certainly good Advice, and if We have Wisdom enough to follow it, a Diversion by a war in Europe, will be a more effectual Relief to us. I am &c.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> The letters received were probably those to the Committee of Secret Correspondence written by the American Commissioners on January 17 and 22, by Arthur Lee on January 3, and by Benjamin Franklin on January 4, plus Lee's January 21 letter to Samuel Adams. Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:244–45, 248–51.

Despite Adams' demur that he could tell Warren very little about the contents of the letters, he sent Warren a copy of the commissioners' January 17 letter the following day. For additional comments on the letters received and some quotations from the now missing January 21 Lee letter to Samuel Adams, see Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams, April 1; and Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry, April 7, 1777.

## Elbridge Gerry to James Warren

*Philadelphia, March 31, 1777.* Congratulates Warren on the recent arrival of 12,000 stand of arms and 50 tons of powder at Portsmouth, N.H., and additional arms and powder at Baltimore, Md. "We have a Letter from Doctor Franklin, Doctor Lee and Mr. Deane at Paris, Where Things wear a most favourable Aspect. This much I may venture to com-

municate; the people of France are enthusiastic for America. Two Millions of Livres are offered to the Commissioner by private Gentlemen without either Interest or Security; the Cry is general for a Declaration of War against England; 30 Sail of Ships of the size in France and as many in Spain were to be ready for the Sea by the beginning of April; 10,000 Troops were ordered to march for Brest, the Destination of which was unknown . . . all Europe are in Favour of America, Russia and Portugal excepted, and the little powers who have heretofore assisted G. Britain. . . . The Tories in Philadelphia industriously circulate to their Disadvantage that there are few Whigs to be found in that once eminently patriotic Metropolis. . . . I hope soon to hear that at a Meeting in Faneuil Hall, it is determined to follow the Example of Baltimore, and that Boston is liberated from every Tory or suspicious Character in the place. . . .

Abstract originally prepared from extract printed in *The Collector* 57 (April–May 1944): 86. The RC was found when this volume was in page proof, too late for inclusion here. But for the complete text of Gerry's letter, see Appendix, pp. 693–94.

## John Hancock to Edward Antill

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Philadelphia, 31st March, 1777.

In consequence of the foregoing Resolution, you are hereby directed immediately on Receipt of this to Deliver up to the Civil Authority of this State the person mention'd in the said Resolve.<sup>2</sup>

I am, Sir, Your very hum. Servt, John Hancock, Prest.

MS not found; reprinted from *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:269.

<sup>1</sup> Antill was lieutenant colonel of Moses Hazen's Second Canadian Regiment.

<sup>2</sup> On March 29 Congress had ordered Edmund Minyer, the adjutant of the Second Canadian Regiment, to be tried by Pennsylvania authorities for the murder of Jacob Gross, a resident of Lancaster County. *JCC*, 7:208.

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Philadelphia Congress 31 March 1777

I have it in Charge from Congress to inform you, that they Approve of the Sentence of the Court Martial, & your General Orders for the Execution of James Molesworth, which you will Carry into Effect.<sup>1</sup>

I am, Your very hum servt. John Hancock, Presid

RC (NH<sub>i</sub>).

<sup>1</sup> On this day James Molesworth was executed for his efforts to entice three Philadelphia pilots to assist Lord Howe in a projected assault on the city. *JCC*, 7:210; and *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:270–82.

## New Jersey Delegates to William Livingston

Sir Philada. Mar. 31. 1777.

The inclosed petitions from three of the Jersey Prisoners were presented to Congress & referred to us. We have visited them in the Hospital & find they have had the small Pox very favourably. They are almost fit to go to Work & very pressing for a Discharge.<sup>1</sup>

We can find no Method of determining the Cause of their Detention & as the Council of Safety are sitting so near us, we beg to know from you what Report it would be proper to make.<sup>2</sup>

We are, Sir, Your most hble Servts.

Jona. D Sergeant

Abra. Clark

Tr (DLC). Copied for Edmund C. Burnett "from the original then in the office of Stan V. Henkels of Philadelphia."

<sup>1</sup> The prisoners in question were John Jolly, John North, and William North. *JCC*, 7:209. On April 11 the two Norths took the "Oaths of Abjuration and Allegiance as Established by the Legislature of this State" before the New Jersey Council of Safety. *Minutes of the Council of Safety of the State of New Jersey* (Jersey City: John H. Lyon, 1872), pp. 18-19.

<sup>2</sup> At this point the copyist ended his transcription of the body of the letter and summed up the remainder of it with the sentence: "A description of the prisoners follows."

## John Adams to James Warren

Philadelphia April 1. 1777

Having an opportunity by so carefull an Hand as Captain Wentworth of Portsmouth, I have ventured to inclose you a copy of a Letter which appears to me to be of Consequence.<sup>1</sup> You will make use of it with Caution, among such Friends only as can be trusted to make a discreete Use of it.

Inclosed is also a state of the stocks in Amsterdam, on the seventh and twelfth of November by which you will see that the British Funds were falling very fast, notwithstanding the News from New York and the precipitate Efforts in England to equip a Fleet of observation.

The Dutch dont appear so inimical to us, or so indifferent to our Fate as We apprehended they would be. Letters from that Quarter are fully of opinion that the opportunity for the House of Bourbon is too fair and inviting to be let slip.<sup>2</sup>

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Adams enclosed a copy in his hand of the January 17 letter from the commissioners at Paris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. Warren-Adams Papers, MHi; and Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:248-51.

<sup>2</sup> Adams undoubtedly had in mind William Carmichael's November 2, 1776, letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which was written at Amsterdam and discussed the state of both the stock and money markets. *Ibid.*, pp. 184-90.

## Samuel Adams to Elizabeth Adams

My dear Betsy

Philad. April 1st 1777

I wrote to you the Week before last by the Post and since by a Mr Vose of Boston. I wish to hear of your having receivd both those Letters, especially the last for a Reason which must be obvious to you if you have seen its Contents.

We have receivd the important Intelligence from New Hampshire of the Arrival of a Vessel from France with near twelve thousand Stands of Arms and a great Quantity of Powder &c. I congratulate my Country on the occasion. By this Vessel I have a Letter from my much esteemed Friend A[rthur] L[ee].<sup>1</sup> I will recite to you some Passages in his Letter because I recollect with how much Pleasure you used to read those which I formerly receivd from him, and because I think the Spirit with which he writes and the Intelligence containd in his Letter, will afford Satisfaction to you and the Circle of our Friends. "It is certain," says he, "that the Peace of Europe hangs upon a Cobweb. It is certain that, Portugal & Russia excepted, all Europe wishes us Success. The Ports of France, Spain and the Mediterranean are open to us on the Terms of Neutrality. We have already received a Benevolence in this Country, which will enable us to expedite and augment the Stores necessary for your Defence." The Benevolence he refers to, is a voluntary Loan of a Sum of Money in France, without Interest, and to be paid as soon as it can conveniently be done after a Peace shall be establishd. You may now remember what I wrote to you from Baltimore in December last. I think we shall soon reap the happy Fruits of the Determinations of Congress at that time. My Friend tells me "It is with Pleasure he revives a Correspondence which the particular Situation of Affairs has so long interrupted." His Letter is dated in Paris the 21st of January. I had before written to him on the 2d of the same Month, being then fully satisfied that mine, if no ill Accident happend, would find him in that Place.<sup>2</sup> I then observd to him that our Country had called him to act in a more enlarged Sphere. He soon after informs me that he had "obeyd the Call of Congress into *the immediate Service* of our Country." What this Service is our Friends will conjecture. You may assure them that Matters merely commercial are not in the Line of *his* Genius. In my Letter, I remark to him that our Country is now enduring the sharp Conflict, confiding that righteous Heaven will never look with an indifferent Eye upon a Cause so mani-



festly just, and so interesting to Mankind. In his Letter, he tells me with the Spirit of Prediction "When with Roman Fortitude & Magnanimity we refuse to treat with Hannibal at our Gates, he looks forward to Roman Greatness." I am perswaded that these united States will never treat with any Power which will not acknowledge their Independence. The Inhabitants of Boston, who have heretofore acted so disinterested and patriotick a Part will Surely persevere in supporting this all important Cause. America has already the Applause of the virtuous and the brave. If we are not wanting to ourselves, we may be assured of the Smiles of Heaven. However ready some of the Powers of Europe may be to aid us in this glorious Struggle, it will certainly in the End be best for us, if we can save ourselves by our own Exertions. Our Sufferings will indeed be greater if we are left to ourselves, but the more dearly we purchase our Liberties, the more we shall prize them and the longer we shall preserve them.

Yesterday an unhappy Man<sup>3</sup> was executed here for attempting to entice some of the Pilots to enter into the Service of Lord Howe. He was first examined by the Board of War, and afterwards tried by a Court Martial and condemned. The Pilots pretended to him that they were in earnest till the Bargain was made and he had given them the Bribe. They then seizd him and had him committed to Goal. Before his Execution the whole Proceedings of the Court were laid before Congress and the Judgment was approv'd of. The Evidence against him was full and clear, but not more so than his own Confession. He said that he had been at New York about a Month before he was detected, and that Mr Galloway, a Man of Fortune & a noted Tory in this State, who last Winter went over to the Enemy, was his Adviser there. No Doubt there were others here who secretly abetted & supported him. Some ordinary Persons, I am told have disappear'd since this Mans Detection.

It has been reported here these few days past that Lord Howe is gone to England, and it is thought by some to be probable upon this Circumstance that a new Proclamation has made its Appearance sign'd William Howe only.

I am informed that General Carleton and his Brother have been very ill used and are greatly disgusted with the British Court. That Lord George Sackvill and all the Scotch hate them, and they him. You remember the old Proverb.

I am affraid, my dear, I have tired your Patience with a Letter altogether upon political Matters. I have only time to tell you that I remain in good Health & Spirits. Believe me, Your affectionate, SA

April 2d. Your kind Letter of the 19th of March is just come to my hand.

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> See Samuel Adams to Arthur Lee, January 2, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> James Molesworth.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Philadelphia April 1st 1777

I wrote you by an opportunity which went home last week,<sup>1</sup> & now take the liberty of troubling you with a few lines, whose purpose is to inform you of some interesting matters that have come to light since that time.

One Molesworth a person of some credit in this City was detected in an attempt to corrupt the pilots & engage several to go to New York in order to bring round the fleet. These honest fellows secured him, & so ordered the business that not the least doubt remains of his guilt, which he found so evident that dissimulation was vain & he confessed it. He was tried by a Court-Martial as a spy, found guilty, and executed. Some of his coadjutors are still in confinement, & some principal conspirators are not yet apprehended, but we have hopes of being masters of them in a short time.

Letters from France of the 21st January bring very pleasing intelligence. Some part must not yet be communicated. Two millions of livres are in bank at Paris, ready to answer our drafts. France & Spain are exceedingly friendly to us. And twelve thousand stand of arms, twenty tons of gun powder, a quantity of woollens & sundry necessary articles are arrived at Portsmouth in New Hampshire, *in a French armed vessel*; many others are on their way, & expected every day. In short, Sir, our prospect begins to clear up, & nothing is wanting but some vigorous exertions this season. I am sorry I can not give you a good account of our army: our recruits come in very slowly, & I fear there is very great abuse in the recruiting department. We have at present our whole attention bent towards the ensuing campaign. We are in a pretty fair way, if recruits do not fail us. Every thing in Europe bears the appearance of a war, & I should not wonder if the flame should catch this summer. At all Events so apprehensive is England, that she will not dare to make very vigorous efforts in America. I shall not, Sir, take up any more of your time at present, but shall trouble you again when any thing interesting occurs.

I have the honor to be with the greatest respect & esteem, Your Excellency's most obdt Serv't,

Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Burke's last known letter to Governor Caswell was begun on March 11 and continued through March 26.

## John Hancock to John Langdon

Sir, Philada. April 1st. 1777.

In Consequence of Information that a Vessel has just arrived at Portsmouth loaded with Arms & Powder, the Congress immediately came to the enclosed Resolves which I am directed to transmit for your Compliance therewith.<sup>1</sup> You will therefore give Orders for the Delivery of five thousand Stand of said Arms upon the application of the Council of Massachusetts Bay for that Number, to whom I have also transmitted a Copy of the enclosed Resolves. I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed & very hble Servt.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:211-12.

## John Hancock to the Massachusetts Council

Gentlemen, Phila. April 1st. 1777.

Congress by your Letter of 20th March having received information that a vessel has arrived at Portsmouth in New Hampshire loaded with arms & powder came to the inclos'd Resolves, which I have the honour of transmitting, and to which I beg leave to request your attention.<sup>1</sup>

Previous to the delivery of the arms to the Colonels of the regiments you will please to order them to be stamp'd agreeably to the resolutions of Congress, and to direct that two receipts be taken for them, with a view that one may be lodged with the commissary of military stores & the other with the board of war. You will also be pleased to transmit to the board of war a particular account of the powder advanced by the state of Massachusetts-bay to the United States, and of the several persons to whom it has been delivered.<sup>2</sup>

I have wrote to the Agent at Portsmouth to deliver the arms to your order agreeably to the enclos'd resolves, & have the honour to be with great respect, Gentlemen, Your most obedt. Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

[P.S.] I Beg leave to Request your Attention to the other Resolves inclos'd.<sup>3</sup>

RC (M-Ar). In a clerical hand, with signature and postscript by Hancock. Endorse: "Honble John Hancock's Letter Inclosing a Number of Resolves of Congress relative to Deserters & arms &c."

<sup>1</sup> The council's letter to Hancock is in PCC, item 65, 1:191-94. In response Congress resolved on March 31 that 5,000 of the arms and 15 tons of the powder

aboard "the ship *Mercury*, of Nantz," should be sent to the Massachusetts Council. *JCC*, 7:211-12.

<sup>2</sup> On this day Hancock also wrote the following letter to "The Officer Commanding the Continental Troops At Boston," William Heath: "I have it in Charge from Congress to direct that you deliver fifteen Tons of the Powder lately arrived at Portsmouth to the Order of the Council of Massachusetts Bay, to repay the Powder advanced by that State for the Use of the Continental Army and Navy." Heath Papers, MHi.

<sup>3</sup> Since Hancock's last known letter to the council on March 26, Congress had passed no resolutions specifically relating to Massachusetts. On April 1, however, it did approve a resolve asking "the legislatures, and, in their recess . . . the executive power of the respective States" to send the Board of War lists of the Continental officers they had appointed. *JCC*, 7:217. As the endorsement on this letter indicates, moreover, Hancock also enclosed a February 25 resolve on the apprehension of deserters. *JCC*, 7:154-55.

## Robert Morris to John Jay

Dear Sir

Philada. April 1st. 1777

The enclosed Letters came by a French Ship to New Hampshire & were sent under Cover to me by Mr Langdon with many others. I believe they are from England and wish they may convey agreeable tidings. Last Week a Brig arrived here with 6800 Muskets & 2100 Gun Locks, another in Maryld with 633 bbls Powder, & this Ship into Portsmouth brought with her about 12,000 Muskets, 1000 bbls Powder, a number of Blankets & Cloathing. All these are for Continental Account and many others may be daily looked for. An offer was made to our Commissioners at Paris of two millions of Livers without Interest to be repaid when these United States have established their Independancy in Peace & quietness, no Security or Condition required. You may be sure they accepted the noble Bounty & 500,000 Livers are paid down the 20th Jany. 500,000 more was to be paid every three months untill compleated or sooner if our affairs require it. The Comrs. were well received & promised protection of the Court and that their propositions shou'd all be duely attended to. Great armaments & preparations for war &c. I fancy however, we must try our Strength alone for awhile longer, altho I firmly believe a general War will & must eventually take place in Europe this Summer. I wish our army was in the Field, we want nothing else to make the day our own. With great regard & esteem I am, Dr sir, Your affectionate hbl servt,  
Robt Morris

P.S. My best Compts to Mr Duane & Mr Livingston.

RC (Windsor Castle: The Royal Archives).



## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr.

Sir

Philadelphia, April 1. 1777

I received your favour of the 20th Ultimo. Am Sorry to hear that the recruiting Service goes on So Slow in Connecticut at this time when we ought to have an Army in the Field Sufficient to Subdue the Enemy. General Gates is ordered to Tycondaroga. He sets out to morrow. It is not determined what other General Officers are to be sent there. General St. Clair is talked of for one.<sup>1</sup> Congress has this Day passed some resolutions for regulating the payment of the army which are ordered to be published in the News Papers.<sup>2</sup> The Pay of the Assistant Paymasters in the Northern Department was this Day augmented to forty Dollars per month and 3 rations per Day. The Pay of the Regimental Paymasters is the Same—that was fixed last Saturday the 29th Ult.<sup>3</sup>

We have Letters from our Ambassadors at Foreign Courts as late as the 27th of January. The accounts are favourable beyond our expectation. They have been offered the loan of large Sums of money without Interest to be repaid when these States Shall be settled in Peace. It was not certainly known whether a War would Soon take place between France & Great Britain, tho' very probable.

You have doubtless heard of the late arrival of a Ship at Portsmouth with about 12000 Stand of Arms, 1000 Barrels of Gun Powder, a Quantity of Blankets & other Woollen goods—about 11000 Stand of Arms lately Arrived in this Port. I Shall move to have a further Supply of money immediately Sent to Albany.<sup>4</sup> I should think it advisable for you to return there as soon as your affairs will admit. I am your humble Servant,

Roger Sherman

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Arthur St. Clair was ordered to Ticonderoga this day. See *JCC*, 7:217.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:214–15.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:209, 216.

<sup>4</sup> Congress authorized the Board of War to send Trumbull \$400,000 on April 8. *JCC*, 7:240.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 1st Apl 1777

I Heartily Congratulate you on the arrival of the French Ship at Portsmouth. I hope Your anxiety for Arms to put in the hand of Your new Levies will now vanish. I dare say you are anxious to know what accounts are receiv'd from Our Commis[sioners] at the French Court, where they are all arriv'd & are treated with all the Respect due to Gentn in their Station. Their Letter is dated the 19th [*i.e.* 17th] Jany at a time

when the most dismal accounts was daily arriving of our retreating army, dress'd up in such colours as was most agreeable to the British Tyrant, & his minions. Notwithstanding all this, a Bank was Establish'd at Paris of 2,000,000 Livres without interest, or security, and at the same time the Credit of Britain is sunk so much that even in Holland the Sale of their Stock stop'd three days, for want of Purchasers, which was never before known. France & Spain are making the most vigorous preparations for War, the former had 30 sail of the line nearly ready for sea, the Latter was to have that number ready by the first of Apl. Britain has been so mean as to require a Guarentee of Hanover to enable her Tyrant to draw all his Troops out of that Electorate, which has render'd her much more contemptable in the Eyes of all Europe then she was before. The Prince of Hesse has given leave for raising 4000 Troops, which has caus'd an insurrection in his country. France is determin'd if possible to prevent Russia from sending Troops to America. The House of Austria is firmly united with France. That restless Spirit, The King of Prussia is on the wing of inquiry. He is extreamly anxious to be inform'd of our trade & wishes to see our ships enter his Ports. In short as it is the interest so it is the wish of all the Powers of Europe (Portugal, Russia & Britain excepted) that the Independence of America shod be supported. After duely considering all these Circomstances, judge you if the Enemy can expect any considerable reinforcements very speedily, but Still it behoves us to use every Exertion to have a powerful army in the field, that we may experpate those Devils incarnated. When I think of their Brutality & worse then Barbarian Cruelties it raises my Indignation beyond discription. Sorry I am to find such Backwardness in the recruiting service throughout the States, when one noble effort wod in a very few months rid us of those Infernals.

We have many conjectures of the intentions of the Enemy, form'd from the accots. Brot. from York, by People who have made their escape from thence. Some suppose this City is their object, others think they intend to make a desent on the Eastern shore of Virginia, & Maryland, while others are of Opinion that they will still persue the original plan, of effecting a junction of their two armies. Whatever is their intention, certain I am that if we had one half of our intended Army in the field we could easily frustrate all their Schemes and destroy their army.

I wish to know how Your Loan office goes on, & whether you have lay'd an additional tax, to sink some of Your money, this is a matter that I wish was seriously attended too. People surely never were nor never will be better able to pay a Tax then at this time & it is as sure that nothing can tend so much to establish the credit of the circulating money as lessening the Quantity. If proper measures are speedily taken I doubt not (with the assistance of the funds that are & will be soon establish'd in Europe) that our paper may be as stable, as Gold or Silver.

That proper measures may be immediately taken & that they may have the desir'd effect is the Sincere wish of Your very affecte. Friend & Most  
Hume Sert.  
W Whipple

P.S. The Cargo that is arriv'd at Portsmouth is part of the loan that you heard of some time ago. Very large Quantities are daily expected in different parts of the Continent.

RC (MeHi).

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

No. 8

Philadelphia 1st Apl 1777

I have this day receiv'd Yours per Capt Smith who is arriv'd at Baltimore. I inform'd you in my last what orders I had given respecting a few Barrels flour to be shipt for my accot but my orders did not get to hand till the Dove was full.<sup>1</sup> I suppose that to be the case as Messrs Purviance has not acknoledg'd the receipt. I believe nail Rods are not to be had there, Insurance is not to be had. By tomorrows post I shall order 10 bbs. flour to be shipt on board the Friends Adventure. You may have what part of them you Please but till I know Your mind shall suppose one half to be Yours. Mr. L—— will have orders by this conveyence to send another vessel to Baltimore or this place whichever is found to be most safe.<sup>2</sup> By her I will order a few Barrels more, in which you may be interested what part you please but I by no means think it worth while to ship any quantity for sale as the high price it bears here will not admit of a profit equal to the Risque. I hope you have the whole Commission for what ever Business you do for the Public. The last accots. from Europe are more encouraging then any we have had before, & we expect to have more frequent intelligence as many French ships as well as American are expected in many parts of the Continent. I am in no doubt we shall soon have sufficient Funds in Europe to support our paper Currency, but it is still necessary that large sums shod be rais'd by Tax. I hope your assembly will lay a large additional Tax to that already made. Certain I am that the People were never better able to pay a tax then at this time.

This goes by Capt Wentworth who intends to set out in the morning, I therefore close this, it now being towards morning & an hour or twos repose seems necessary. Your very affecte Bror,  
W Whipple

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> The shipment of flour on private account was discussed by William Whipple in his March 25 letter to Joseph rather than in his "last" of March 27, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> See Secret Committee to John Langdon, April 2, 1777.

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 1 April 1777

My Two last were of the 22d and 15t Ultimo<sup>1</sup> both of which I hope by this Time you have received, tho' there is nothing more contained in them than what had been before repeated in former Letters, yet as I find it an agreeable Amusement to Write to you (which you will easily believe by the Number of Letters I have Sent you) I shall therefore indulge myself in it. This indeed is the only Thing left me to supply in some Measure the more agreeable Pleasures of converse. Your Situation being out of the common Post Road is the Reason why I hear from you so seldom tho' I fully expected a Letter by the Post which is just now in from the eastward but have recd none. I should have expected more Letters had not you and the Family lately been sick with the small Pox, and I suppose that this Circumstance was designedly concealed from me least I should suffer Anxiety on that Account. I was happy in being informed by Dr. Smith that you and the children were out of Danger on acco of that Disease, I wish to know wheither you are all restored to Health, and by what circumstance it was that Mariana had the Distemper so hard. I hope She is not much scar'd with it, but if she is she will always be Amiable while she continues to do as well as what she easily can. I Wrote a Letter to Oliver the 11t last Month directed to him at N Haven,<sup>2</sup> but probably enough it did not find him there, or I think he was kept at Home till the Family had got thro with the small Pox. But wherever he is I hope he spends his time well in releiving the Wants of Others or improving his own Mind in the precious days of youth, so as to injoy those happy Fruits in the future Periods of Life, which a proper use of Time will never fail to yield. I have no more Reason to doubt of his Attention, than I have that of your Person but such Want the kind advice of Experience to guide them thro' the dangerous Paths of youth—tho such advice is often suspected to be no more than the Pevishness of Age. The other children are under your more immediate Notice, and consequently will have that Advantage which no other Situation would afford them. The Happiness of my Family being the object of my most sincere Wish, I should, as I cannot see my children have more frequently Wrote to them, had not the Variety of Business, and the uncertainty as well as want of Oppertunity too much prevented. I have not been told wheither the school has been kept up. I hope the unhappiness of the Times has not prevented an Attention to Education. As to Mr Lyman I have heard nothing from him since he Went to be inoculated, but I presume he is somewhere. I do not know why some of my Freinds have not wrote to me, they have more Leisure than I have, yet I cannot hear from them. I suspect they Regard a little Formality in these Matters, which never can consist with a free correspondence. I think that I have not recd but Two or three Letters from Litchfield for more than Two months past, but



I expect by next Post to receive half a Dozn. at once. I may believe so as well as not for if none comes I shall be just where I am. By the Blessing of God I enjoy Health. My Love to my children and Friends, and be assured that I am yours with the most inviolable affection,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wolcott's March 15 letter has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> Wolcott's March 11 letter to his son has not been found.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

April 2 1777

Yesterdays Post brought me your kind Favour of March 8. 9. 10, with a Letter inclosed for [from] each of my Sons. But where is my Daughters Letter? That is missing. I regret the Loss of it much.

You think I dont write Politicks enough! Indeed I have a surfeit of them. But I shall give you now and then a Taste, since you have such a Goust for them.

By a Letter of 17 Jany. Dr. Franklin, Mr. Deane and Dr. Lee, met in Paris, and on 28 December had an Audience of the Count de Vergennes, Secretary of State and Minister of foreign Affairs; laid before him their Commission, with the Articles of the proposed Treaty of Commerce; were assured of the Protection of his Court, and that due Consideration should be given to what they offered. Soon after they presented a Memorial on the Situation of our States,<sup>1</sup> drawn up at the Ministers Request, together with the Articles of general Confederation, and the Demand for ships of War, agreeable to their Instructions. Copies of all which Papers, they gave to the Count D'Aranda, the Spanish Ambassador, to be communicated to his Court.

They were promised an Answer from the French Court, as soon as they could know the Determination of Spain, with whom they design to Act with perfect Unanimity. In the mean Time they are expediting several Vessels laden with Artillery, Arms, Ammunition and Cloathing.

The Ports of France, Spain and Florence (that is Leghorn in the Mediterranean) are open to the American Cruizers, upon the usual Terms of Neutrality.

They write for Commissions to be given to Privateers, and for more frequent and authentic Intelligence.

Great Efforts are now making by the British Ministry, to procure more Troops from Germany. The Princes in Alliance with France, have refused to lend any, or to enter into any Guarrantee of Hanover, which England has been mean enough to ask, being apprehensive for that Electorate if she should draw from it, any more of its Troops.

Four more Regiments (two of them to be light Horse) are raising in Hesse, where there has been an Insurrection, on Account of drafting the People: and now great sums of Money, are distributed for procuring Men. They talk of Ten thousand Men in all to be sent over this Spring.

The Hearts of the French are universally for Us, and the Cry is strong for immediate War with Britain. Indeed every Thing tends that Way, but the Court has Reasons for postponing it, a little longer. In the mean Time, Preparations are making. They have Twenty six sail of the Line manned and fit for the Sea. Spain has seventeen sail in the same State, and more are fitting with such Diligence, that they reckon to have thirty sail in each Kingdom, by April. This must have an immediate good Effect in our Favour, as it keeps the English Fleet at Bay, coops up their Seamen, of whom they will scarce find sufficient to man their next set of Transports, will probably keep Lord Howes fleet more together for a fear of a Visit, and leave Us more Sea room, to prey upon their Commerce and a freer Coast to bring in our Prizes, and supplies from abroad.

The Letter then mentions a Circumstance much to our Advantage but this is a secret.<sup>2</sup>

So strong is the Inclination of the Wealthy, in France to assist Us, that our Ambassadors have been offered a Loan of two Millions of Livres, without Interest, and to be repaid when the united States are settled in Peace and Prosperity. No Conditions or securities are required. They have accepted this noble Benefaction, and one half of it is paid into the Hands of their Banker. On the strength of this supply, they are now in Treaty for some strong ships.

Lee is in N.Y. confined, but otherwise treated well.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:195-96.

<sup>1</sup> This may be a reference to the letter of the commissioners at Paris to Vergennes, January 5, 1777. Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:245-46.

<sup>2</sup> This is probably a reference to a contract for American tobacco, which was ultimately signed by Benjamin Franklin and Silas Deane with the Farmers-General of France on March 24, 1777. *Ibid.*, pp. 300-301.

## John Hancock to Thomas Johnson

Sir

Philadelphia April 2d. 1777

I have the pleasure to congratulate you on being appointed to fill the most honorable and distinguished Station in the Gift of a free people to bestow. And having the utmost Confidence that the Affairs of the State now entrusted to your Care, will meet with all the Attention they require or deserve, it is with the highest Satisfaction I address you on this important Occasion.

You will perceive from the inclosed Copy of a Letter from General Washington<sup>1</sup> that the Information it contains is of the most serious Na-

ture, and that our Enemies are meditating an Invasion of the State of Maryland. In this Situation of Affairs, I am earnestly to request you will take such Measures, as will have a Tendency to defeat their designs, should any Attempts be made in Consequence of this Intelligence.

The inclosed Resolve of Congress respecting the removal of the public Stores to the places therein mentioned, I am to request you will pay the utmost Attention to, and give Orders for removing the same as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honor to be with the greatest respect, Sir, Your most obedt & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

Tr (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's March 31 letter to Hancock reported that around March 21, 3,000 British and Hessian soldiers had sailed from New York and seemed to be headed for "Chesepeak Bay with a view of making a descent on the Eastern Shore, or . . . to proceed to the Head of Elk, taking Annapolis and Baltimore in their way." PCC, item 152, 4:47-48; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:217-19.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock sent Governor Johnson a resolution of this date calling for "the immediate removal of the powder and military stores at Annapolis to the town of Frederick, in Maryland, and the powder and military stores at Baltimore, to the town of Carlisle, in Pennsylvania." JCC, 7:219.

## John Hancock to the Virginia Governor and Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. April 2d. 1777.

The enclosed Copy of a Letter from General Washington containing the most important Intelligence, I am commanded by Congress to transmit to you with the greatest Expedition.

Altho from this Information the Enemy are said to have in View an Attack on some Part of Maryland, yet as it is uncertain where they will bend their Force, it is highly necessary that each State, and yours in particular, should make every Preparation for Defence. I am therefore most earnestly to request you will take such Measures in Concurrence with Govr. Johnson, to whom I have wrote on the Occasion, as will be most effectual to counteract the Designs & Plans of our Enemies.<sup>1</sup> I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> On this day Hancock also wrote letters to Gov. John McKinly of Delaware and to the Pennsylvania Executive Council. The first two sentences of these letters are identical to the first two in the present letter, but there are variations in the final sentence of each. Whereas Hancock then wrote to McKinly that "I am therefore most earnestly to request you will give Orders for taking such Measures as the Intelligence herewith forwarded must naturally suggest," he said to the Pennsyl-





transmit a fair and clear Account thereof, with the Captains acknowledgement of the receipt of them, together with the Invoice & bill of Loading for the Cargo to the Honorable Doctor Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esqrs. American Commissioners at Paris &c &c.

Respecting the Cargo you have received by this Ship you will find enclosed herewith Certain Resolves of Congress the 31st Ultimo<sup>1</sup> which you will please to comply with and we must also observe to you that by another Resolve passed the 24th Feby all Continental Arms are directed to be Marked and stamped,<sup>2</sup> that resolve is published and we request you will have all these Arms (not already delivered out) properly marked & stamped the charge for doing it may be placed to our Account. After Complying with the Resolves of Congress you'l please to deliver the remainder of the Powder, Arms & Flints to the Order of the Continental Board of war of which the Honble John Adams esqr. is chairman and the Residue of the Cargo to James Mease Esqr. the Cloath[ier General] or to his Order, but as no perfect Invo[ice of] these Goods has been transmitted us, we [must] trouble you to take Inventories of every thing you deliver and transmit us Copies thereof with the Receipts of those you deliver them to. As you are in want of money to pay the former Ballance and will want more to load this Ship we send you by Capt. Geo Wentworth Twenty Thousd Dollars which is charged to your Account.<sup>3</sup> We are, sir, Your obed servts,

Robt Morris

Richard Henry Lee

Wm. Whipple

RC (Capt. J.G.M. Stone, Annapolis, Md., 1973). In a clerical hand and signed by Morris, Lee, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:211-12.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:151.

<sup>3</sup> The committee also enclosed the dimensions for a ship of 74 guns, which had been requested by Langdon in his January 23 letter to Whipple. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1020-21.

## Roger Sherman to Joseph Trumbull

Sir,

Philadelphia April 2d. 1777

I suppose the President has informed you what was done in Virginia relative to the purchase of Flour & Indian Corn.<sup>1</sup> William Aylet Esqr Deputy Commissary General (who is a very honest discreet man) is directed to purchase & store Sufficient quantities of those articles & have them ready to deliver to your order. The highest price he had given for corn when he wrote was half a Dollar per Bushel. Much depends upon your employing none but persons of strict Integrity, and great prudence & discretion in your department; otherwise the greatest Frauds & pecula-

tion may take place. Your Credit, and I fear the public Interest has suffered much from your employing a Gentleman in this place to purchase provisions. There are great Complaints against him that he gives very exorbitant prices & that the prices of articles have been much increased by his indiscretion. I have no personal knowledge of these things but they are publicly talked of by persons of the best Credit. Congress did not think proper to displace him because he is your Deputy and you accountable for his conduct—but the President was twice directed by Congress to inform you of the complaints.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Wharton is the person. Enclosed is a copy of an Advertisement Posted up by one of his Deputies. It is said that last winter Mr. Wharton made public declaration in this City that he was employed to purchased a large Quantity of Rum for the Army and the highest price would be given and that he gave like notice to the people in the Country as to the purchase of Pork & Beef & other provisions. I dont know on what terms you employ people but sure I am it will not do to employ them to purchase on Commissions Unless you limit the prices: for the greater prices they give the more will be their profits, which is such a Temptation as an honest man would not wish to be led into.

A Gentleman at Baltimore has made proposals for supplying the army by Contract at a certain price per ration not to risque more than his own time and trouble. He has also proposed another plan by which all the provisions for the Army and those purchased for exportation either by the public or private merchants should go through the same hands, so that they may govern the prices, by not interfering one with another. A copy of both are Enclosed. I wish to have your opinion on them & whether you would be willing to undertake in either way. I am one of a Committee to whom it is referred.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Smith of Baltimore & Mr. Gerry are the other two. We thought it not best to do any thing upon it 'till we knew your thoughts on the Subject. I wish you would write to me whether you think either of those ways preferable to the present mode.

Our late accounts from France are favourable, tho' no treaty had been made, nor was a Declaration of War between France & Great Britain determined on when the letters came away which was the latter end of January. A War I believe is probable and perhaps not far distant. Our Commissioners have been offered the loan of two million Livres without Interest to be repaid when these States are Settled in peace & safety—500.000 Livers were actually received. I wish our army could be recruited without loss of time as I think with fifteen or twenty thousand men we might now totally defeat the enemy's army. If the Men will inlist they can now be armed and clothed. I hope my Country Men have not lost their Martial Spirit & love of Liberty. I am Sir with due regards, your humble Servant,

Roger Sherman

P.S. General Schuyler about 2 months ago transmitted to Congress the copy of a letter published in Gain's New York Paper, said to be written by you to Colo. Williams, & requested that Justice might be done to his Character—but no Answer was returned. He has lately-repeated his Complaints, complaining that Congress has not done him that Justice in the affair which they *might* & *ought* to have done, on which the President was desired to inform him that it was improper for Congress to interfere in Disputes between officers in the Army, but that they ought to be settled agreeable to the Rules of the Army—withal administring a Gentle reproof to him for the indecent stile in which he wrote to Congress on that as well as some other Occasions.<sup>4</sup> I am sorry your Letter was intercepted (if you wrote such a one) though I think the authority of Gains Paper is not sufficient proof to support any charge whatever.

R.S.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:208–9; and John Hancock to William Aylett, March 30, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> For the charges against Carpenter Wharton, see John Hancock to Joseph Trumbull, January 30, 1777, note.

<sup>3</sup> This committee was appointed on February 20 “to confer with Colonel Buchanan, on the subject of a contract for supplying the army with provisions.” *JCC*, 7:134. There is nothing in the journals to indicate that this committee ever reported, but William Buchanan was appointed a deputy commissary general of purchases on June 18. *JCC*, 8:477. For further information on the reorganization of the commissary department, see Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull, April 19, 1777, note 1.

<sup>4</sup> See John Hancock to Philip Schuyler, March 18, 1777, note 2.

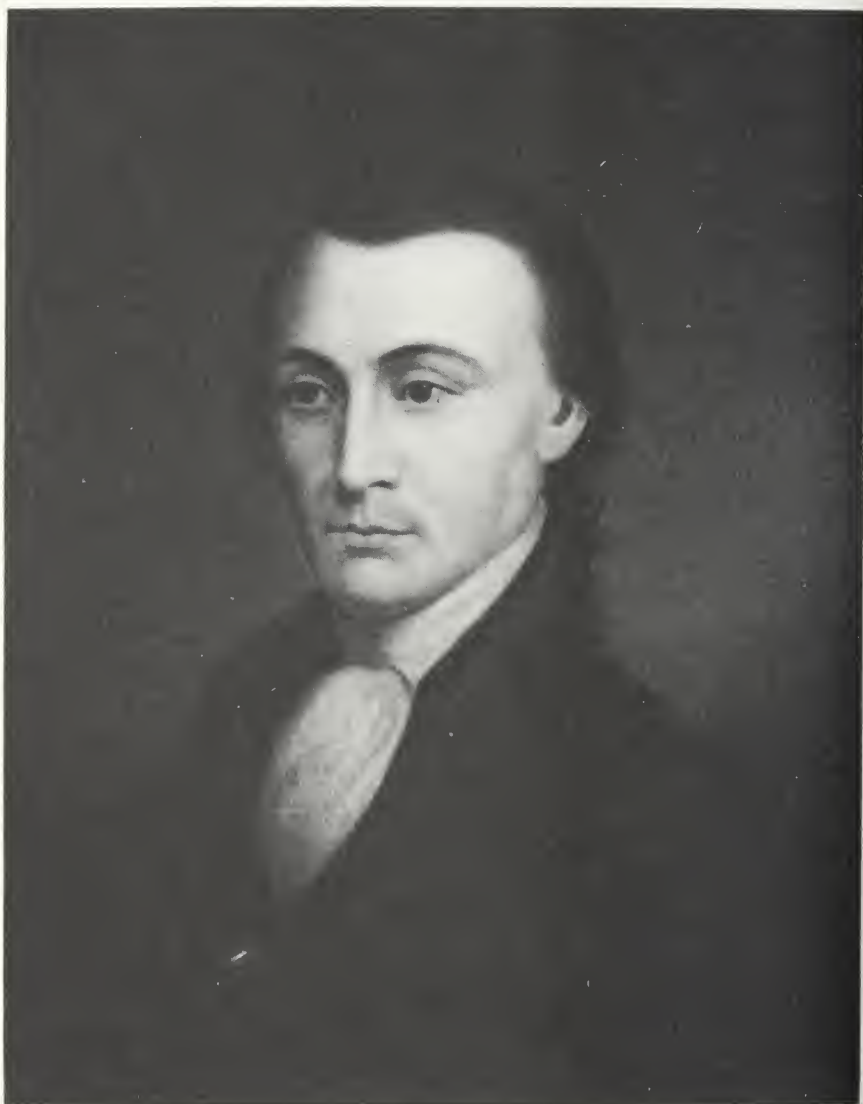
## Matthew Thornton to Meshech Weare

Hond. sir,

Philadelphia 2d April, 1777.

The day before yesterday the Glad news of the French Ship's arriving at Portsmouth, Came to Congress. The Letters from our Agents inform that they were Honourably Received, that they are Offered the Loan of money to a very great amount on the Credit of the United States of America to be paid when the war is over, without interest, that France, & Spain are making great preparations, & that very Soon all Europe will be in a flam[e]. A few days ago, a Ship arivid here with 6800 arms, & 2000 Gun Locks, & others Stores. 2 Days Ago, a man was Executed here for hiring pilots for the enemies.

Our Scouting parties, in the Jerseys, are Killing & taking more or less of the enemie almost every day. There has not been any Extraordinary Battle, or movement for Sometime. The Congress are very much Surprized that New-Hampshire did not Acknowledge their receiving the money, & your Delegates are as much Surprized that they have no news from N.H. & that the Accounts are not Come. The Con-



Matthew Thornton



gress are very busey. Col. Whipple is well. My Constitution will not allow my Staying here Longer than next May. Take the trouble to present my Compliments to the Honble Council, & Assembly & Except the Same from him who has the Honr. to be, with great Esteem, & Respect, your very Hble sert. Matthew Thornton

RC (PHi).

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia April 3. 1777

As you seem so inquisitive about Politicks, I will indulge you so far (indulge, I say, observe that Word indulge! I suppose you will say it ought to have been oblige) as to send you a little more News from abroad. As foreign Affairs are now become more interesting to Us than ever, I dare say your political Curiosity has extended itself e'er this all over Europe.<sup>1</sup>

The Agent of the King of Prussia, has often made Proposals of a commercial Nature, to our Agents in France, and expressed a Desire that some American would go to Berlin, at the Instance of his sovereign, who wishes to have a clear Idea of the Nature of our Commerce. You must know, that this Prince has been several Years, dreaming of making his Port of Embden, an Amsterdam.

We cannot as yet, depend that the Dutch Merchants will venture to trade directly to America, at their own Risque. The States however have declared, in Answer to a fresh Remonstrance of General York,<sup>2</sup> that their Ports are open to all Nations, and that their Trade, to and from their own Colonies, shall be unmolested, their subjects complying with the ordinances issued by their high Mightynesses. Their Prohibition of exporting Warlike stores extends to all British subjects.

Without a very material and apparent success of the British Arms in America, a Loan would be very slowly negotiated for England in Amsterdam. Nothing hinders them now from selling out of the English Funds, but their not knowing what to do with their Money. For that Country may be called the Treasury of Europe, and its Stock of Specie is more or less, according to the Necessities of the different Princes in Europe.

The Credit of France has been very low of late. The Mismanagement of the Finances in the late Kings Reign: The Character of the late Comptroller General, Mr. De Olugny [*i.e.* deClugny], had reduced it so low, that it was impossible to borrow any Thing considerable, on perpetual Funds. By Life Rents, something might be done. Perhaps a Financier, in whose Probity the World have a Confidence, may restore their Credit. The French Stocks rise on the Appointment of Mr. Tabou-

reau. That it is possible for France to borrow, is certain, for at the Time when Mr. Turgot was removed, he was negotiating a Loan, and was likely to succeed, for Sixty Millions of Guilders. The Credit of Spain is extreamly good: That Kingdom may have what Money it will, and on the best Terms. The Emperors Credit is also good, not as Emperor but from his hereditary Dominions. Sweeden and Denmark have good Credit. The first the best. They have Money at four Per Cent. and it is not long since the King of Sweeden borrowed Three Millions of Guilders, at that Interest to pay off old debts at five Per Cent.—his Interest is paid punctually. Prussia has no Credit but his Treasury is full, by squeezing the last Farthing from his People, and now and then he draws a little Money from Holland, by reviving obsolete Claims. The Credit of the Empress of Russia, is very good, for she has punctually paid the Interest of Twelve Millions of Guilders, which she borrowed in her War with the Turks and has lately paid off, one Million and an half of the Principal. These are the strongest Recommendations to a mercantile People. As to America, in the present state of Affairs, it is not probable, that a Loan is practicable, but should it appear evident, that We are likely to support our Independency or should either France or Spain acknowledge it: in either of these Cases We might have Money. And when it shall be seen that We are punctual in our first Payments of the Interest, We should have as much as We pleased.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:197–99.

<sup>1</sup> The remainder of this letter is partly quoted and partly paraphrased from William Carmichael's November 2, 1776, letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence. Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:184–90.

<sup>2</sup> For the activities of Sir Joseph Yorke, British ambassador at The Hague, see Daniel A. Miller, *Sir Joseph Yorke and Anglo-Dutch Relations 1774–1780* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1970).

## Oliver Wolcott to Matthew Griswold

Sir,

Philadelphia 3d April 1777

I have done myself the Pleasure of addressing three Letters to you since I left home all of which I trust you have recd.<sup>1</sup> As I know that you wish to be informed of whatever respects the great Cause in which We are engaged, I shall think myself happy in giving you all the Intelligence which with Propriety I may. Dr. Franklin's Arrival at Paris where he has been kindly recd. you have been acquainted with. France and Spain have by this Time forty ships of the Line fit for Sea and every Thing in those Kingdoms portend a War with G. Britain, which possibly may have already commenced. The call of the French Nation is for a War, and the opulent of that Kingdom have unsolicited Engaged to Advance to

America Two millions of Livres one Quarter of which they have already paid, the Residue to be paid at Short periods, half a million cash Payment, which America is to repay without Interest after Peace shall be established in this country. The French Court have ordered Ten Thousand of their Troops to Brest. The British Court have applied to and obtained of the Prince of Hesse six Battalions more but this affair has occasioned Insults and Insurrections in that Principality. No Russians will be sent to America, and the utmost Force which G Britain will probably be able to send to this country the next campaign will not exceed Ten Thousand men.

The above Facts are well authenticated tho they will not be published in any News Paper which you will please to consider, tho' any other Information may consistent with a Regard to that circumstance be given. We also learn tho not thro' the same Channel that the British Stocks are low in Holland that even for three Days immediately preceeding the arrival of the news that the Enemy had got possession of N. York no Transferr of Stocks was made tho many offered to sell, and those who appeared most desirous of selling were such as were supposed to be best acquainted with the Expectations of the British Court.

The Situation of the Enemy is much the same as it has been for some time past. Howe is probably meditating a Blow as he thinks no Time ought to be lost. We ought to think so to and have our Recruits brot forward as soon as possible. A few months Vigorous and successfull Exertion would probably put an End to the Distresses which We have suffered. America ought not to let the British Army have lain so long a time in the Jerseys nor suffer such Losses as we have done from small partys. Two Days ago a man was hang'd here who had come from N York and had endeavoured to hire Pilots to bring the British Fleet up the River. The Enemy have been constructing light Boat at N York seventy of which are finished and We have pritty good Intelligence that they have three Thousand of their Troops on Board, but Where their Operations may be Time must discover. Genl. Gates is to command at Ticonderoga. Commodore Hopkins is suspend.<sup>2</sup> Other Intelligence you will receive by the Papers.

We do not know in what circumstances the Frigate Trumbull is, I hear she is ready for Sea and will go out soon, our Naval Strength must not be Idle, they might be of immense service in intercepting Supplys and succours for the Army. My best Regards for my Sister and your Family and be assured that I am sir, your most obedient humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtY).

<sup>1</sup> Of the letters he wrote to Griswold after his return to Philadelphia in October 1776, only Wolcott's November 16, 1776, letter has been found.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the circumstances which led Congress to suspend Esek Hopkins from his naval command on March 26, see Marine Committee Examination of John Grannis, March 25, 1777, note 2.

## Board of Treasury to Philip Schuyler

Sir

Treasury Office Philadelphia April 4 1777

We have before Us an Extract of your Letter to Congress of the 24th Feby last relative to the Treasury, & think it proper to give You our Sentiments on the Occasion.<sup>1</sup>

After mentioning an Instruction which We sent to the Commissioners of Accounts, & the Circumstances attending the Expenditure of the Specie which You received from Congress & the several States, You say, "If the unfeeling Villains who contrived & assiduously propagated the report that I detained the specie designed for Canada, were capable of feeling, they must be overwhelmed with Shame & Confusion; & those who lent a willing Ear to such an improbable Tale must come in for a Share of the Reproach."

We think it evident, from the Manner of your addressing Congress on the Occasion, the above paragraph of your Letter, & your Recital of the Instruction, that you supposed the Treasury had issued the latter in Consequence of such a Report as You mention, & that to avoid the "Reproach" apprehended therefrom, You proposed to fix it, as well on "those who lent a willing Ear to the improbable Tale" as on the "unfeeling Villains who contrived it."

Under these Circumstances, We ask, Whether your Conduct would not have been more prudent & consistent with the Character of a Gentleman, if You had enquired how far the Conjecture relative to the Instruction was right, previous to your adopting the harsh & offensive Expressions contained in your Letter to Congress? You would then have been convinced, that no such report had ever reached the Ears of the Treasury Committee, that the Cause of the Instruction (of which they were the Judges) had made it necessary, & that your Duty as a Commanding officer required your assistance in having it complied with.

But admitting it was issued by the Board in Consequence of their crediting a Report as before suggested, We again ask, did they more in this affair than their office authorized, & required of them? By recurring to the Instructions of the office in the printed Journals of Congress,<sup>2</sup> which surely You ought to be acquainted with, You will find "that all persons intrusted with public Monies, shall, within a reasonable Time after being called upon for that purpose, by the Committee of the Treasury, produce their Accounts, & Vouchers at the Treasury office, in Order to their being settled & adjusted in the Manner therein directed," & "that the Committee shall be authorized to apply to the *Commanding officer* & others in the Continental service, for such Materials & Information as the Committee may judge to be useful for stating, explaining, or checking the public accounts, in Order to their being fairly & justly settled," from whence it is evident, that the Measure adopted by the Committee was nothing more than they were authorized & required to do, without being



under the unfavourable Impressions which you mention. Would they not then, *under such Impressions* have hazarded their own Reputation, by not proceeding further in the Affair than sending an Instruction to their Commissioners? Yea, ought they not in addition to this, to have immediately layed the matter before Congress, that the subject of so high a Charge by an impartial Enquiry, might have been honorably acquitted or received his Demerits?

On the Whole, We think You will be convinced on cool Reflection, that in this affair You have been mistaken in your Conjecture, hasty in your Measures, illiberal & even indecent in your Resentments, & altogether unjustifiable in your Conduct towards the Treasury.<sup>3</sup> We cannot but think We have a Right to expect better Treatment from your Department, & altho We wish to harmonize with every officer civil & military of the United States, We assure You Sir, that nothing will ever induce Us to betray the public Trust, or to submit to Indignities whether offered in a public or private Capacity. We are sir your most obedt. & very humble Servts.  
Elbridge Gerry, by order of the treasury Board.

FC (PHi). In the hand of Elbridge Gerry and endorsed by him: "Copy of a Letter from the Treasury Board to General Schuyler, Apr. 4, 1777."

<sup>1</sup> General Schuyler's February 24 letter was received in Congress on March 12. *JCC*, 7:170; and *PCC*, item 153, 3:114.

<sup>2</sup> The following quotations are from the resolves regulating the treasury adopted on April 1, 1776. *JCC*, 4:243-46.

<sup>3</sup> Congress had also reprimanded Schuyler on March 15 for "expressions" in his February 4 letter to Congress, which were "to say the least, ill-advised and highly indecent." *JCC*, 7:180-81.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. April 4th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress, which I have the Honour of transmitting, will naturally claim your Attention from their great Importance.<sup>1</sup>

The Regulations relative to the Payment of the Troops and the Department of the Paymaster General, will I hope be the Means of introducing Order and Regularity into that Part of the Army; where, it must be confessed, they were extremely wanted.<sup>2</sup>

General Gates having laid before Congress the Proceedings and Sentence of a Court Martial on a certain James Molesworth who was accused and found guilty of being a Spy, they immediately approved the same. He has since suffered the Punishment due to his Crime. From his repeated Confession, it appears that Mr. Galloway was extremely active in engaging him to undertake this infamous Business, and was the Person employed to make the Bargain with him. He says indeed, Lord Howe was

present: but from the Description he gave of his Person, it is supposed he must be mistaken.<sup>3</sup>

The Congress have directed Genl. Gates to take Genl. Fermoy with him to Ticonderoga, and such other French Officers as he may think proper. Genl. St. Clair being ordered to Ticonderoga, but previously to repair to this City to wait the further Order of Congress, you will please to direct him to repair here accordingly as soon as possible.<sup>4</sup> I have the Honour to be, with the most perfect Esteem & Respect, Sir, Your most obed. & very hble Serv.

John Hancock Presidt.

P.S. April 7th. Since writing the foregoing, Congress have passed sundry other Resolves, which I enclose, and to which I beg Leave to refer your Attention.<sup>5</sup>

The Hospital Departmt. will be perfected this Day, & shall be Transmitted to you immediately after.<sup>6</sup>

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and last paragraph of postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to the resolves mentioned below, Hancock also sent Washington resolves of March 29 and 31, as well as of April 1–2, on a conference with General Lee, prisoner lists, compensation for James Warren, the appointments of Ephraim Blaine and three brigadier generals, the lottery, ranking of officers, the defense of Maryland and Lewes, Del., hospitals, General Armstrong, and the commissary and muster departments. *JCC*, 7:207, 209, 212–14, 217–24.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:214–16, 218.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:210, 219; and Hancock to Horatio Gates, March 31, 1777.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:211, 217. On April 6 Hancock wrote the following brief letter to Arthur St. Clair: "The Congress having ordered you to repair to Ticonderoga and put yourself under the Command of Genl. Gates in that Department, I have it in Charge to direct that previous to your setting out for Ticonderoga, you repair with the utmost Expedition to this City of Philada. there to wait their further Orders." PCC, item 12A, fol. 179.

<sup>5</sup> These were resolves of April 4 and 5 about hospitals, Baron de Arendt, Ephraim Blaine, Benjamin Flower, and General Armstrong. *JCC*, 7:225–26, 228.

<sup>6</sup> See Hancock to Washington, April 9, 1777.

## Marine Committee to Certain Naval Officers

Sir

(Circular)

April 4th 1777

The Committee have written to the Council of war in Providence requesting their assistance in getting the Frigate under your Command manned with all possible expedition.<sup>1</sup> On your part as the service of your Country demands it, so this Committee expect your most diligent exertions in getting immediately manned, and out to sea, there to Cruize in such Lattitudes as will be most likely to fall in with & intercept the enemies Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or to supply their Army at New York.<sup>2</sup> If it should be your good fortune to meet with any of the

enemies Ships of war not greatly your Superior in force we doubt not but you will do honor to the Navy of the United States, and to yourself by bringing such into port with you.

Should your efforts aided by the Council of War<sup>3</sup> be insufficient to man your ship fully for a Cruise you are in that case to endeavour to get her manned in such manner as to carry the Ship round to Boston and there exert yourself to compleat your number and proceed on the Cruise aforesaid.<sup>4</sup>

Wishing you success and health we are Sir, Your friends & servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "Captain J.B. Hopkins of the Frigate Warren. Captain Abram Whipple of the Frigate Providence. Captain Dudley Saltonstall of the Frigate Trumbull."

<sup>1</sup> The Marine Committee's letter to the Rhode Island Council of War is dated April 5 and printed below.

<sup>2</sup> In place of the preceding two sentences, the RC of the Committee's letter to Dudley Saltonstall reads: "We desire that you will use your most diligent exertions in getting the Frigate under your Command immediately manned for Sea, when you are to proceed on a Cruise in Such Latitudes as will be most likely to fall in with, and intercept the Enemies Transport vessels coming to reinforce or supply their Army at New York." IaDaM.

<sup>3</sup> Last six words omitted in RC to Saltonstall. Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> None of the officers to whom this letter was addressed was able to carry out the committee's orders. William J. Morgan, *Captains to the Northward: The New England Captains in the Continental Navy* (Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishing Co., 1959), pp. 76-80.

## Marine Committee to the Rhode Island Council of War

Gentlemen

Philadelphia Apl. 5th 1777

We have ordered the Frigates in the State of Rhode-Island &c out on a Cruise, and as it seems they are not fully manned, We earnestly request your Assistance that they may be manned with the utmost Expedition. If they cannot be fully and expeditiously manned in your State, We desire that you would order Draughts to be made from the Militia of Men best acquainted with the Sea to assist in carrying them to Boston where they may avoid a Blockade and procure Seamen, such of the Soldiers who may be put on board the Frigates to be discharged, that they may return and join their respective Companies, as may not chuse to inlist in the Sea Service.<sup>1</sup>

We have addressed ourselves to you, Gentlemen, on a Supposition that you are invested with Powers sufficient to enable you to comply with our Request if it should be necessary to draught from the Militia, and that the Genl. Assembly may not be sitting when this reaches you. If the Assembly should be sitting when you receive this, and you are incompetent to the

Business, please to lay this Letter before them, otherwise We hope that you will execute it, for by doing it you will render an essential Service to the common Cause and greatly oblige, Gentn., your most obedt. humble Servants,

John Hancock William Ellery

Robt Morris Abra. Clark

Wm. Whipple Tho Burke

Richard Henry Lee

RC (R-Ar). Written by Ellery and signed by Ellery, Burke, Clark, Hancock, Lee, Morris, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> See Marine Committee to Certain Naval Officers, April 4, 1777. In May 1777 the Rhode Island Assembly authorized Capt. John B. Hopkins, commander of the *Warren*, to impress "a sufficient number of . . . seamen, transient, foreign persons." John R. Bartlett, ed., *Records of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in New England*, vols. 8-10 (Providence: Cooke, Jackson, & Co., 1856-65), 8:230.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 5th April 1777

The enclosed letter from Messrs. Purveance came to hand since mine of the 1st inst<sup>1</sup> was closed. I then expected that he (Capt Wentworth) would have gone off immediately, but he has been unavoidably detained to this time, but has now got his dispatches and will go off early in the morning; he has with him \$20,000 for account of the Secret Committee. I wish money may come into the Loan Office so that you may be supplied from thence in future and if you will keep me well informed of the State of that fund I shall order matters accordingly.

I must refer you to Capt Wentworth for news other than what I have wrote you in my last and am with much respect, Dr Sir, your most obt hble servt,

Wm Whipple

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Whipple's April 1 letter to Langdon has not been found.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia April 6. 1777

You have had many Rumours, propagated among you, which I suppose you know not how to account for. One was, that Congress, the last Summer, had tied the Hands of General Washington, and would not let him fight, particularly on the White Plains. This Report was totally



groundless. Another was, that at last Congress untied the General, and then he instantly fought and conquered at Trenton. This also was without foundation, for as his Hands were never tied, so they were not untied. Indeed, within a few days past a Question has been asked Congress, to the Surprize I believe of every Member there, whether the General was bound by the Advice of a Council of War? No Member of Congress, that I know of ever harboured or conceived such a Thought. "Taking the Advice of a Council of War" are the Words of the Generals Instructions, but this meant only that Councils of War, should be called and their Opinions and Reasons demanded, but the General like all other Commanders of Armies, was to pursue his own Judgment after all.<sup>1</sup>

Another Report, which has been industriously circulated, is, that the General has been made by Congress, Dictator. But this is as false as the other Stories. Congress it is true, upon removing to Baltimore, gave the General Power, to raise fifteen Battallions, in Addition to those which were ordered to be raised before, and to appoint the Officers, and also to raise three thousand Horse, and to appoint their Officers, and also to take Necessaries for his Army, at an appraised Value. But no more. Congress never thought of making him Dictator, or giving him a Sovereignty.

I wish I could find a Correspondent, who was idle enough to attend to every Report and write it to me. Such false News, uncontradicted, does more or less Harm. Such a Collection of Lyes, would be a Curiosity for Posterity.

The Report you mentioned in your last,<sup>2</sup> that the British Administration had proposed to Congress, a Treaty and Terms, is false and without a Colour. On the Contrary, it is now more than ever past a doubt, that their fixed Determination is Conquest, and unconditional Subjugation. But there will be many Words and Blows too, before they will accomplish their Wishes. Poor abandoned, infatuated Nation.

Infatuation is one of the Causes to which, great Historians ascribe many Events: and if it ever produced any Effect, it has produced this War, against America.

Arnold, who carries this, was taken in his Passage from Baltimore. He sailed with Harden, for Boston. They took 15 Vessells, while he was on Board the Man of War. Your Flour was highly favoured with good Luck.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:199–200.

<sup>1</sup> After a conference with Gen. Nathanael Greene, Congress had resolved on March 24 "that General Washington be informed that it never was the intention of Congress, that he should be bound by the majority of voices in a council of war, contrary to his own judgment." *JCC*, 7:196–97.

<sup>2</sup> Abigail had told John in her March 8–10 letter that "We have a report Here that Letters are come to Congress from administration, and proposals of a treaty, and some other Stories fit to amuse children, but Experienced Birds are not to be caught with chaff." Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:172.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia April 6. 1777

This Evening Major Ward delivered me Yours of 23d of March. It is a great Pleasure to me to learn that your Flour has arrived. I begin to have some opinion of my good Fortune. If I could have been certain, of the Vessells escaping the many Snares in her Way, I would have sent a dozen Barrells.

The Act, my dear, that you were so fond of will do no good.<sup>1</sup> Legislatures cannot effect Impossibilities. I detest all Embargoes, and all other Restraints upon Trade.<sup>2</sup> Let it have its own Way, in such a Time as this and it will cure its own Diseases. The Paper emitted by the states jointly and separately is too much, it is more than enough to purchase every Commodity and every Species of Labour this is wanted, and this Excess of Quantity is the true Cause of the Artificial Scarcity of Things, but the Price of this will be in Proportion to the Demand, in spite of all Regulations. To save my self the Trouble of thinking I will transcribe for your Amusement a few observations of Lord Kaims, on the subject of Money, Scarcity, Plenty, and Demand. Read them, compare them with the Increase of Money in America, the Decrease of Goods and Labour, and the Increase of Demand for both, and then judge whether the Regulations and Embargoes can do any good. . . .<sup>3</sup>

LB (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:201.

<sup>1</sup> Adams was referring to the Act to Prevent Monopoly and Oppression passed January 25, 1777, by the Massachusetts legislature, which attempted to fix prices and wages in the state. Massachusetts Council Minutes, DLC(ESR).

<sup>2</sup> See Adams to William Tudor, March 22, 1777, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> In his letterbook copy, Adams went on to include a long quotation on wage and price fluctuation from Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Six Sketches on the History of Man* (Philadelphia: R. Bell and R. Aitken, 1776), pp. 78–96.

## John Adams to Samuel Cooper

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 6. 1777

This Evening I was favoured with yours of 24 March by Major Ward.<sup>1</sup> I thank you, sir for your kind attention to me, and for affording me an opportunity of renewing a Correspondence which has been interrupted on my Part, by an incessant application to Business, and by some little Diffidence in the Post, depend upon it, by no Diminution of Friendship or affection.

Our Country sir, is in an high Fever, but it has a strong Constitution, and good Physicians I hope. The Symptoms are not desperate. The Worst that I see is, a Thinness of the Life blood, I mean the Revenue. But Air, and Regimen, and Exercise, and a little Medicine will restore it—especial-

ly as it has youth on its side. We have better Prospects of Trade, a Vessel arrived yesterday from Sweden with Powder, Flynts, Lead, sulphur &c &c, and I think shall be able to negotiate Loans. Britain cannot procure any great Reinforcements without involving herself in a French and Spanish War—and her Credit in Holland is very low.

The News from France you will learn from Coll Warren to whom I wrote it in Confidence, but he will shew it to you. The Army fills up gradually but rather slowly. There are Troops upon their March from N. Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, towards Head Quarters. The Troops from N. England I hope will soon follow. But my opinion is that the Enemy is more afraid of Us, than we are of them, even now. Their Ruin is inevitable, if our States exert themselves. If they stay at Brunswick they are undone. If they take the Field and march to Philadelphia, there they will meet their Fate, besides that by taking the Field so early, they will lay a Foundation for a sickly Army, thro the whole Campaign. If our General Court had laid their Levies on the Towns last December as I most earnestly intreated them to do, in my opinion Howes destruction would have been effected before now.

I am surprised to hear you call for Lottery Ticketts. Dr. Jackson, one of the Managers, went from this Place, a long Time ago, with a Load of them to Boston.

We have been engaged many days in preparing a Plan for the sick, and I think the best possible Provision will be made. No Expence will be Spared, and the best Physicians and surgeons will be employed.

We have now Arms and military stores in Abundance. We have Quarter Master and Commissarys stores in Plenty. Blanketts and Cloaths are most wanted, but We have a considerable Quantity of them and expect more. We have Tents of the best Quality for thirty thousand Men. With submission to Providence we shall make it do—and so farewell tyrannical Grandam. I am sir &c.

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Cooper's March 24 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

## John Adams to James Warren

My Friend

Philadelphia April 6. 1777

The Business of the naval and marine Department, will I hope, be soon put in a better Train than it has been. A Board of Assistants has been appointed here, consisting of three Gentlemen, not Members of Congress, whose whole Time is devoted to the service. Mr Hopkinson, Coll Nixon, and Mr John Wharton are the Men.<sup>1</sup> The first is a Gentleman of Letters, the second an able Merchant, the third an eminent shipwright.

There is a Talk of appointing a similar Board at Boston, and a Commissioner at every considerable Port in N. England. Who would be proper Persons for those Places? They should be well acquainted with Navigation. They should be well informed in Trade. They should be Men of Character and Credit.<sup>2</sup>

The Marine Committee, have lately recd Letters from Captns. Thompson, McNeal, and several others, pointing out Defects, Abuses and Mismanagement, and proposing Plans of Improvement, Redress and Reformation. These will do good. This is the way to have things go right; for officers to correspond constantly with Congress, and communicate their sentiments freely.

McNeal, I suppose, by his Letter, before this, has sailed, and I hope your Embargo is off, before now, that the Privateers may have fair Play. Indeed I am sorry it was ever laid. I am against all shackles upon Trade. Let the Spirit of the People have its own way, and it will do something. I doubt much whether you have got an hundred Soldiers the more for your Embargo and perhaps you have missed opportunities of taking many Prizes and several Hundreds of seamen.

South Carolina Seems to display a Spirit of Enterprize in Trade, Superiour to any other State. They have Salt at half a Dollar a Bushell, and dry Goods in great Plenty tho dear. Many French Vessells have arrived there. Some Bermudians and some of their own. They have exported their Crop of Indigo and a great deal of Rice. They have some Privateers, and have made several Prizes.

Tobacco too, begins to be exported in large Quantities from Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina. Vessells sell at very high Prices in all these States. In short in one more year, I fancy Trade will be brisk, in every Part of the Continent, except with Us, the Destruction of whose Fishery has deprived Us of our Staple, and left Us nothing to export. We must build ships and cutt Masts, and take Fish with our Privateers &c. I am &c

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> On November 6, 1776, Congress had authorized the appointment of three men "to execute the business of the navy." John Wharton and John Nixon were appointed on November 13 and Francis Hopkinson was added on November 18, 1776. *JCC*, 6:929, 946-47, 958.

<sup>2</sup> Congress established a navy board at Boston on April 19, but James Warren, William Vernon, and John Deshon were not appointed to it until May 6. *JCC*, 7:281, 331.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 6. 1777

Yours of 23d March, was handed to me, this Evening by Major Ward.<sup>1</sup> Your Letter from Plymouth by the Post, I duely recd. and immediately



wrote an answer to it, but upon reviewing it, afterwards, I found so many bold Truths in it that I concluded not to send it, lest Peradventure it should get into Hugh Gaines Gazette;<sup>2</sup> and I thought it a Pitty that so many Sacred Truths should appear in Company with so many infamous Lyes, as that Paper ushers into the World, whenever it appears.

I am much obliged to you for your Sentiments, concerning the Navy. A Board I believe will be established at Boston—and a Commissioner in each considerable Port in New England. Complaints are frequently brought here, from Boston and from Providence, concerning the Continental Agents and other officers. I am sorry for this, but cannot help it. At Providence, I fear, by what I have lately heard, there has been a System of selfishness, and at Boston of Incapacity. I had the Honour of belonging to the first Naval Committee, which set all our maritime affairs agoing: and they did it with a Vigour, Assiduity and Dispatch, which precluded all Censure and Complaint. But I went home last December, was twelve Month, and advantage was taken of that opportunity, one or two other Members being absent at the same Time, Coll Lee went home and Gadsden, and Langdon, and Deane was left out, to choose a new Committee.<sup>3</sup> Since which there has been nothing but Languor, Censure and Complaint. Upon my Return they did me the Honour to put me upon the Board of War, which takes up my whole Time, every Morning and Evening, and renders it totally impossible for me to look into the marine Department, which if I had Leisure to do, ignorant as I am of every Rope in the ship, I would perish if I did not put that Department in a reputable order. There is nothing wanting but some one Person, whose Vigour, Punctuality, and Constancy should draw the Committee together every Morning and Evening, direct their Attention to the Object, and keep it fixed there. There are Gentlemen enough of the Committee who understand the Business, and the Board of assistants are pretty well qualified and every Man upon the Continent, who knows any Thing of the subject might easily be induced to contribute the assistance of His Knowledge at least by Letter.

The Fracas between <sup>4</sup> and McNeal had reached this Place before your Letter. Hope it will do good. Am glad to hear that our Quota is likely to be raised at any Rate. Send them along and let us beat the Scoundrels, to Atoms, as I am Sure we can and shall. I am &c

[P.S.] This Letter so full of myself, and so abusive to others, is intended barely to exculpate myself. I cannot bear any share of the Blame of the failures in the marine Department.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> Warren's March 23 letter to Adams is in the *Warren-Adams Letters*, 1:303–6.

<sup>2</sup> Adams was responding to Warren's February 22, 1777, letter, but no copy of his unsent letter has been found. *Ibid.*, pp. 294–97.

<sup>3</sup> Adams appears to have been confused by the appointment of the various naval committees. Adams was only added to the Naval Committee on October 30, 1775, as part of Congress' plans to enlarge its nascent naval program, but he was not a member of the standing Marine Committee, which was appointed on December 14, 1775. His reference to the election of "a new Committee" is apparently to the March 6, 1776, addition of Samuel Huntington, Jonathan Dickinson Sergeant, Benjamin Harrison, and Edward Rutledge as replacements for Silas Deane, Richard Henry Lee, Stephen Crane, and Christopher Gadsden to the latter committee. *JCC*, 3:311-12, 428, 4:186.

<sup>4</sup> John Manly, who commanded one of the Continental frigates built in Massachusetts. Hector McNeil was captain of the other. See Warren to Adams, March 23, 1777, *Warren-Adams Letters*, 1:304-5.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir

Philadelphia Apl. 6th. 1777

Your will receive with this a Letter from Messrs Saml. & Robt. Purviance, inclosing an Invoice of Sloop Diamond's Cargo, and an Account of Disbursements, by which it appears that there is a Ballance due to them of £164.16.8.

After waiting a convenient Time I shall make a fresh Application for the Ballance due to our State, and out of the Monies I may receive pay the above Ballance. If I should not be able to procure an Order on the Treasury in Season, I have wrote those Gentlemen that I would borrow and transmit them the Money due to them upon the first Notice.<sup>1</sup>

Inclosed is a Resolve of Congress respecting your granting Commissions, which I transmit because in the Multiplicity of the Presidents Business it may be forgot by him. I laid the Paragraph of your Letter which related to that Point before Congress immediately upon the Receipt of your Letter. Congress did nothing in the Matter, which amounted to an Acquiescence. A Day or Two ago a Letter from the President of So. Carolina was read in Congress representing that for the Want of Commissions, Instructions &c he had issued Commissions, and desiring that a Resolve might Pass which might give Validity to his Commissions. This brought to my Mind your granting Commissions, and induced me to move the Resolve which is now inclosed. If Contl. Commissions should be wanted you will send for them in Time.<sup>2</sup>

It is said that the Troops, which in a Letter to Commodore Hopkins<sup>3</sup> I mentioned had embarked, and desired him to communicate to you, have disembarked; but in a late Letter from the General he does not mention it. It is his Opinion that this City is the great Object of the Enemy and it is too the Sentiment of Genl. Greene.<sup>4</sup> I wish We may be prepared to receive them.

I am greatly mortified to find that the Expedition designed by the Genl. Assembly hath fallen through.<sup>5</sup> To what Cause this is owing, I know not; but I am sorry that the Militia of this Continent should by

the military be considered in a Light so little respectable as it is. I know not what Numbers were collected in Consequence of the spirited Resolution of our State, but I should think that Six Thousand Militia conducted by good officers would be sufficient to expell, destroy or captivate the four thousand said to be on Rhode-Island: A Number of whom are doubtless invalids. But this I speak with Submission; for I am unacquainted with the military Walk, I never travelled in it. However in the present as well as the last War Militia did as I remember and have done many notable Feats. I could wish to have this Business taken up again if it can be done with a good Prospect of collecting an Army of six or eight Thousand Men, and some able, spirited Officers to conduct them. I am not alone in my Opinion of the Advantages which would attend such an Expedition, nor of the Prowess of Militia. You will excuse these Hints, suggested and thrown out from a Mortification I feel in having a handfull of the Enemy in Possession of an Island so beneficial to them, when it appears to me that our Militia with the Aid of our Sister States could very easily dislodge or destroy them, and from a Love of Country. Mr. Marchant is not arrived. I hope the Request in my last will be complied with. I am with great Regard your Honor's most obedient Servant,

Wm Ellery

RC (R-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Ellery's letter to the Purviances has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> The subject of Governor Cooke's grant of privateering commissions is dealt with more fully in Ellery to Cooke, December 31, 1776, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> No letters from Ellery to Esek Hopkins have been found.

<sup>4</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:348-49.

<sup>5</sup> For the failure of this effort to drive the British out of Rhode Island to materialize, see *ibid.*, pp. 25-26, 114-15, 232-33, 270-71; and Joseph Spencer to George Washington, March 2, 1777, Washington Papers, DLC.

## John Hancock to Henry Fisher

Sir, Philada. April 7th 1777.

The Congress considering the very defenceless Situation of the Coast near Lewistown, and that the Persons & Property of the well affected Inhabitants of the United States are exposed to the Designs of our Enemy in that Quarter, have come to the enclosed Resolve to raise an independant Company on Continental Establishment.<sup>1</sup>

In their opinion, your Zeal in the Cause of Freedom & America entitles you to the Command of this Company, which I am directed to offer to you, and to inform you if you should decline it, that they desire you will nominate a suitable Person in your Stead, and that in either Case, you appoint the Subaltern Officers; for which Purpose I enclose you blank Commissions.



You will please to acquaint me as soon as possible of your Receipt of this, and your Determination in Consequence thereof.

I am, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt. J.H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Mr. Henry Fisher, Lewis-town."

<sup>1</sup> Henry Fisher, a Delaware pilot, had written to the Pennsylvania Council of Safety on March 14 urging Congress to station some men at Lewes, Del., to protect pilots there against a surprise attack by the British. The council sent this letter to Congress, which on April 4 authorized Fisher to raise and command an independent company "for the safeguard of the pilots and the persons and goods of other well affected inhabitants and subjects of these states, residing or being near Lewistown and the coasts of Delaware bay." Delaware delegate James Sykes was highly critical of Fisher's proposed appointment, although he did not reveal his reasons to Congress. See *JCC*, 7:224; *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:263; Thomas Scharf, *History of Delaware, 1609-1888*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888), 2:1226; and James Sykes to George Read, April 10, 1777. Fisher did not accept the proffered appointment, but he did appoint the officers for the company, which the April 4 resolve also empowered him to do. *JCC*, 7:224, 304.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

Dear Sir,

Philadelphia April 7. 1777

I thank you for your favor which I found here on my return from Virginia.

Weak, and exposed as our enemies are in the Jerseys, to a stroke that would be decisive, we cannot avail ourselves of it for want of men, altho we have arms, tents, cloaths, and every necessary ready for 20,000 Soldiers. The Levies come up very slow, and these are obliged to undergo inoculation before they join the Army, so that the General has not more than 4000 with him now, and the enemy have about 7000. Yet they continue narrowed in their quarters and greatly distressed for forage. O for 10, or 12 thousand Americans to sweep these Vermin from our land. We have received very agreeable intelligence from the Commissioners (Dr. Franklin, Mr. Deane & Dr. Lee) of the United States to the Court of France. They have been received with great cordiality, promised protection, and an answer to their proposals as soon as Spain has been consulted, with which Country France means to act in close concert. The French had in January 25 sail of the line ready & Spain had 17. And both were certainly to have 30 by April. Ten thousand French troops were marched to Brest, where the Fleet lay, and opposite the English coast, which will no doubt occasion alarm and prevent the sending more Troops from G. Britain. The Court of London had solicited the Guarantee of its Continental possessions in Europe, and was refused by the Allies of France in Germany. The commissioners had negotiated a loan of two millions of Livres, to be repaid when America was in peace and



prosperity, without even the mention of interest, and the Ports of France, Spain, & Leghorn are open to our Prizes as well as our Trade. These things look well, and if we are not wanting to ourselves, must in [time fix] the freedom and happiness of America. We have 12,000 stand of Arms arrived at Portsmouth in N. Hampshire with other Military Stores, and 8,000 stand come in here.

The enemy lately made an attack by surprize on our posts upon the highlands of Hudsons River, but they were repulsed and driven on board their Ships with precipitation and disgrace by an inferior number of American Troops. They have lately embarked Troops at N. York, the Tories say for this City, themselves say they are going to Chesapeake Bay. Some think they mean nothing but to amuse, whilst others imagine they mean to renew their attack on the heights of Hudsons River. Either of the two last opinions I prefer to the former. I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in May at Williamsburg, and remain in the mean time with great friendship and affection dear Sir yours,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (NNC).

## Daniel Roberdeau to Elisha Hinman

Dear Sir

Philada. April 7th. 1777

On receipt of your favor per Capt. Welsh I applied to the Naval Department of Congress, and have now the pleasure of informing you that your command is continued in the Alfred and that your Character stands fair and respectable with the Gentlemen of that Department, to whom I refer you as I doubt not they will write per this Conveyance. I have enclosed my Letter for Mrs. Eliza. Hurlburt that you may be inform'd by her of the irreparable loss I have sustained in the death of my much beloved Mrs. Roberdeau, which I intended to communicate to you, but the Task would be too distressing to repeat my sorrow, therefore you'll be pleased to dispense with a form.<sup>1</sup> I am happy in an Oppy. of serving a Gentleman who stands in so near Connection with my dear deceased Wife & am, Dr Sir, Yr. most obt. huml. Serv. Danl. Roberdeau

P.S. I was informed last Evening yr. Sister & family were well at New-Ark Mountains or Morristown, but that they were much distressed in their retreat in a stormey Night, which is the first intelligence from or of her since the month of December last, when I left her house in so weak a state that the first Stage towards this Place I was conveyed in a bed placed in a covered Waggon.

RC (DNDAR).

<sup>1</sup> Mary Bostwick Roberdeau (ca. 1741–1777) had died suddenly of a fever at Lancaster on February 15, 1777. Roberdeau Buchanan, *Genealogy of the Roberdeau Family, including a Biography of General Daniel Roberdeau* (Washington: Joseph L. Pearson, 1876), pp. 49, 69–70.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 7th Apl 1777

Your favor of the 15th Ulto came to hand Yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I hope Mr. Bettens arrival will hasten the recruiting service, its high time the Troops were in the field, for Heavans sake hurry them on, tho' I hope they will all have march'd before this reaches you. Genl. Gates sets out [this] day to take the Command of the Northern army. One of the Lottery managers is gone Eastward & I hope has Tickets enough to satisfy the thirst for Gaming for I shod be exceeding sorry to hear our state had set up a Lottery. I find Govr Wentworths letter has made no great impression on your mind, nor can it on any one that knows him. In my last I gave you the state of matters in Europe so far as I could collect them from the latest and Best accounts from thence, by which there is very little probability of Britain getting such an army from Russia &c as he tels of.

The Southern States are at least as firm as ever, N Carolina has form'd their Government & chosen Kasswell [Richard Caswell] Govr. Maryland has also form'd a Govt. & placed Tho. Johnson in the Chair who has pass'd a Campaign in Jersey, and its said is now as firm as a Rock. The opposition to Govt. here daily declines & they now go on tolerably well. N. York I expect will give an Infinety of trouble. A long Letter was laid this morning before Congress from that Convention respecting the N. Hampshire Grants, a deputation is also arriv'd from the Green Mountain Boys, but their matters are not yet laid before Congress. I sho'd not much care if the Devil had them all.<sup>2</sup>

What advantage could have arisen from a compliance with Genl. Lee's request? Genl Howe certainly wod not agree to the conference unless he Expected to reap some advantage by it, he surely wod not permit an interveiw that cod possibly opperate to his disadvantage, if he has powers to treat with America as Independant States, the door is always open for him, we know very well he has no new powers, nor nothing to offer but Pardon on submission. At the same time that we cod receive no possible Benefit by complying with the Request, the Enemy wod profit much by it. A Packet wod be immediately dispatch'd, & all the Courts in Europe amus'd with our negotiations & the strongest assurances given that peace wod soon take place in America. This was the use made of the Conference last faul by which means the stores that are now arriving, have been

delay'd at least 4 months. The insidious designs were so very evident that there was not a single advocate for the measure.

By intelligence receiv'd by deserters & others the Enemy seem to be preparing to put themselves in motion. Which way they will bend their course is a matter of great speculation. Some suppose this City is their object, others think they will make a decent one on the Eastern shore of Virginia & Maryland while others are of opinion that they will pursue their original plan up Hudsons River, for my own part I think they are very much puzzled, for if they divide the small force they have ruin awaits them.

I am very glad I am like to be reliev'd & hope it will be by the Gentl you mention since you are determined not to spend another Summer in Philad.<sup>3</sup> I hope they will be here by the middle of May.

Please to present my Respects to all Friends & be assured you have the best wishes of Your very affecte Friend & Huml Sert.

Wm. Whipple

RC (NhD).

<sup>1</sup> Bartlett's March 15 letter to Whipple is in the Josiah Bartlett Papers, NhHi microfilm.

<sup>2</sup> The New York Convention's January 20 and March 1, 1777, letters to Congress, which asked for help in restoring the territory of the New Hampshire Grants to the control of New York, were read in Congress on April 7. The January 15 petition of "sundry inhabitants of the New Hampshire grants" seeking recognition as an independent state and the right to send delegates to Congress, was presented to Congress on April 8. The issue was discussed for several days in June in the committee of the whole, and a lengthy report rejecting the New Hampshire Grants' petition was laid before Congress. But no final action was taken, after it was learned that settlers in the New Hampshire Grants had adopted their own constitution. *JCC*, 7:230-31, 239, 8:491, 497, 507-13. The letters and petitions from New York and Vermont are in William Slade, Jr., ed., *Vermont State Papers* (Middlebury: J.W. Copeland, 1823), pp. 66-75. For a discussion of the Vermont constitution, see John N. Shaeffer, "A Comparison of the First Constitutions of Vermont and Pennsylvania," *Vermont History* 43 (Winter 1975): 33-43.

<sup>3</sup> Bartlett discussed his resignation as a New Hampshire delegate in his March 15 letter to Whipple. The FC of the resignation he submitted to the New Hampshire Assembly is in the Fogg Collection, MeHi, and the Josiah Bartlett Papers, NhHi microfilm.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 8. 1777 <sup>1</sup>

Yours of 26 March came by this days Post. Am happy to hear you have received so many Letters from me. You need not fear Writing in your cautious Way by the Post, which is now well regulated. But if your Letters should be intercepted, they would do no Harm.

The F[armer] turns out to be the Man, that I have seen him to be, these two Years. He is in total Neglect and disgrace here. I am sorry for it, because of the forward Part he took, in the Beginning of the Contro-

versy. But there is certainly such a Thing as falling away, in Politicks, if there is none in Grace.

Lee fares as well as a Man in close Prison, can fare, I suppose, constantly guarded and watched. I fancy Howe will engage that he shall be treated as a Prisoner of War, and in that Case, We shall all be easy. For my own Part, I dont think the Cause depends upon him. I am sorry to see such wild Panegyrics in your Newspapers. I wish they would consider the Woes against Idolatry.<sup>2</sup>

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:203.

<sup>1</sup> Adams also wrote a letter this day to John Quincy Adams, giving him advice on reading the biography of "Bamfde Moore Carew." See Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:186, 204.

<sup>2</sup> For the continuation of this letter see John Adams to Abigail Adams, April 11, 1777.

## John Adams to William Gordon

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 8. 1777 Tuesday

I had your Favour of 27 March by this Days Post.<sup>1</sup> That this Country will go Safely through this Revolution, I am well convinced, but We have severe Conflicts to endure yet, and I hope shall be prepared for them, indeed there is one Enemy, which to me is more formidable, than Famine, Pestilence and the Sword, I mean the Corruption which is prevalent in so many American Hearts, a Depravity that is more inconsistent with our Republican Governments, than Light is with Darkness. If We can once give Energy enough to our Governments, and Discipline enough to our Armies to overcome this base Principle of selfishness, to make Citizens and soldiers feel themselves the Children of the Commonwealth, and love and revere their Mother so much, as to make their Happiness consist in her service I shall think We have a Prospect of Tryumph indeed.

Your design, sir of collecting Materials for an History of the Rise, Progress and Issue of the American Revolution, is liberal and generous, and as you will find it a laborious Undertaking, you ought to be encouraged and assisted in it.<sup>2</sup> I should be very willing to contribute any Thing in my Power, towards so usefull a Work. But I must frankly tell you there is very little in my Power. So far from making Collections myself I have very often destroyed the Papers in my Power, and my own Minutes of Events and their Causes. We are hurried away in such a Kind of Delirium arising from the Multiplicity of Affairs, and the Disorder in which they rise in Review before Us that I confess myself unable even to recollect the Circumstances of any Transactions with sufficient Precision to assist an Historian. There are Materials however in Possession of the Secretary of State, and others in the War office, which will be preserved. The Mass



Bay however was the first Theatre and your History should begin at least from the year 1761.

Your Correspondent, whoever he is, has a Talent at Panegyrick enough to turn an Head that has much less Vanity in it, than mine. Sometimes however the extravagance of Flattery is an Antidote to its Poison. I shall not however be made to tremble to think of the Expectations that will be formed from me, by such wild Praises. No such Attributes belong to me; and I am under no concern about answering to what may be justly expected of me. Alas! Who is equal to those Things?<sup>3</sup>

The Affair of the Treasury of H.C. is a delicate business, and as I have no particular connection with it, I believe it will be most prudent for me to mind my own Business, and give myself no Trouble about that.

Mr Hastings's Petition will be attended to, I believe and hope, and his allowance made more adequate to his Merit and services.<sup>4</sup>

I hear a Comtee is come to the Jersies, to know how many Troops are to be posted in our State. I hope our State will not think of detaining any of them. For the Lands Sake let Us have an Army this year to oppose an Army that the Campaign may be neither so disastrous, or so disgraceful as the last. I should be glad to hear from you as often as your Leisure will Admit, and I am with Respect your &c

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Gordon's March 27 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi, and "Letters of the Reverend William Gordon," *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 63 (June 1930): 337-39.

<sup>2</sup> Gordon's four volume work, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment, of the Independence of the United States of America*, was first published in 1788 in London.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Francis Adams omitted the remainder of this letter when it was published in Adams, *Works* (Adams), 9:461-62, presumably because of the following paragraph relating to the financial controversy between Harvard College and John Hancock. For information on Hancock's difficulties with the college over his duties as treasurer, see John Hancock to Samuel Langdon, February 15, 1777, note 1.

<sup>4</sup> Jonathan Hastings' petition concerning his salary as deputy postmaster was ordered to lie on the table on March 19, and on April 12 Congress authorized the postmaster general to pay deputy postmasters an additional allowance "not exceeding 200 dollars per annum." *JCC*, 7:184, 258.

## John Adams to John Thaxter

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 8, 1777

Your kind Favour of March 22 reached me Yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I am much obliged to you for your Account of the Proceedings of the Superiour Court, and wish you to continue to give me a regular Account of their Progress. The Order, and Happiness of the State and even its Safety, depend much

upon that Court, and I long to learn that they are fully employed in the Distribution of Justice, both in the civil and criminal Branches.

The Restraint you mention you may wholly lay aside, and write to me with the Utmost Freedom and without Reserve. . . .<sup>2</sup> I should be happy, to answer any of your Letters and Enquiries as well as I can at this Distance, and with all my Avocations.

There is one Subject, which I would wish you to turn your Thoughts to, for your Amusement, as soon as possible. It is likely to be the most momentous political Subject of any. It is the Subject of Money. You will find in Mr. Locke's Works a Treatise concerning Coins, and in Postlethwait, another of Sir Isaac Newton under the Terms, Coin, Money, &c.<sup>3</sup>

It is a Subject of very curious and ingenious Speculation, and of the last Importance at all Times to Society, but especially at this Time, when a Quantity of Paper more than is necessary for a Medium of Trade, introduces so many Distresses into the Community, and so much Embarrasses our public Councils and Arms.

In the Writings of those great Men you will see the Principles of Commerce and the Nature of Money. And after understanding it perfectly as a Philosopher and a Statesman, I hope you will soon have many honest Opportunities of handling a great deal of it as a Lawyer. I am, sir, with much Esteem your Friend,

John Adams

LB (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:205.

<sup>1</sup> Thaxter's March 22 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> Suspension points in MS.

<sup>3</sup> For further discussion of Adams' interest in these works, see Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:205-6, notes 2 and 3.

## Thomas Burke's Notes of Debates

[April 8, 1777]

Motion from Pennsylvania for recommendation to Governor of Jersey to excuse 40 persons employed by Pennsylvania in Salt works in the Jerseys proposed by North Carolina to amend by adding if not Inconsistent with their Laws. After much debate the amendment was agreed.<sup>1</sup>

MS (NN). For a description of these notes, see Burke's Notes of Debates, February 7, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> See Congress' April 8 resolution to this effect in *JCC*, 7:244. These are the last known notes of debates kept by Burke during his stay in Congress. For some evidence that they may have been written several days after the events they describe, see Burke's Notes of Debates, March 14, 1777, note 1.

Gov. William Livingston of New Jersey was also the recipient of a letter directed to him this date by Maryland delegates Benjamin Rumsey and William Smith. However, the letter, which simply recommends the release of a "Mr. Campbell" of St. Mary's county, Md., as a man "of a good and fair character," contributes little

beyond documenting the presence of Rumsey and Smith in Philadelphia this day. See *Selections from the Correspondence of the Executive of New Jersey, from 1776 to 1786* (Newark: Newark Daily Advertiser, 1848), pp. 50–51.

## Marine Committee to Charles Alexander

Sir

April 8th. 1777

The Marine Commissioners having reported to this Board that the Frigate Delaware under your command is ready for Sea, you are hereby directed to proceed to Cruize for the enemies Transport and Provision Vessels that may be coming from Europe to New York, You will proceed so far to the Eastward and so far from the Coast as will be the least likely to fall in with the Enemies Ships of war until your men are well practiced and fitted to engage with strong ships. When that is the case you are then to draw nearer to the Coast of North America, and Cruise along the said Coast from Block Island to the Capes of Virginia doing your true endeavour to take, burn, Sink, or destroy as many of the enemies Ships and Vessels of every kind as you may have the good fortune to fall in with. The prizes you may be lucky enough to take you will send into such Ports of the United states as you shall think will be the safest from the informations you may receive, you are to pay due attention to the printed Instructions from the Navy Board. It is possible that we may think proper to give you fresh Orders which shall be lodged with Henry Fisher at Lewis Town, and the light House will be ordered to shew a large white sheet when they have such orders and find a frigate in sight. Should any unfortunate accident befall you destroy these Orders rather than let the enemy get them, and you will as opportunities occur transmit us Accounts of your proceedings.

You will be careful of the Delaware, her Stores and materials, kind to your Officers and Men but observing strict discipline, and you are to pay due attention to the printed Instructions of the Navy Board. Inclosed you have Signals whereby you are to know American Vessels of war.

We are sir,

Your hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

## Marine Committee to James Nicholson

Sir

April 8th 1777

It seems currently reported that the Frigate Virginia under your command is ready for the Sea and that She only waits for Orders. Hoping this may really be the case, we despatch the following Instructions by which

you are to be governed.<sup>1</sup> You are immediately to proceed with the said Frigate to sea, embracing such favourable winds as may be likely to run you quickly off[f] the Coast, for as we know you are not in condition to meet the enemies Ships in Battle on advantageous terms at present, we wish you to avoid them until you get well manned and your People tolerably trained, therefore soon as you clear the land shapae your Course for the Island of Martinico, and there deliver to William Bingham esqr. American Resident at that Port the letter sent herewith directed for him. We expect a quantity of Arms, ammunition, Cloathing and Other Stores to be lodged with him by this time and he is directed to put a part of them on board the Virginia and you will direct them to be received on board, granting bills of lading for what are so received. Should Mr. Bingham have shipped these Stores or the greatest part of them previous to your Arrival, it is likely there may be Others at St. Eustatia and you may apply there to Mr. Saml Curson junr., Mr. Cornelius Stevenson & Mr. Henricus Goddet for any such that may have come to their hands granting them bills of Lading for what you receive. When you arrive at Martinico Mr Bingham will inform you what British ships of war are amongst the Windward Islands, also what other of the enemies Cruizers are there, and whether the Inhabitants of the British West India Islands continue the practice of fitting out ships in a Piratical manner without commissions and if upon a veiw of these things Mr Bingham and you should be of opinion that it will be useful to our Commerce for you to make a short Cruize amongst the Islands for the purpose of protecting our Trade and distressing the enemy by all means let it be done.

The British Ships of war after being any length of time in the West Indies are rarely well manned and as we hope your Ship will sail well, we hope you may either be able to cope with them in Battle or to out-sail them, as to any other Cruizers they must outsail or submit to you, but if you can add some of the enemies ships to our Navy it will render essential Service to your Country, inspirit our Seamen and do honor to yourself.

Should you take any Prizes whose Cargoes are perishable or particularly suited to the West India Markets you may order such articles to be sold there and lodge the Money with Mr. Bingham taking his drafts for the same, but the Ship and other parts of the Cargo must come to America for condemnation.

You will be particularly attentive to collect as many Seamen as possible, not only what may be necessary for the Virginia, but as many as you can bring to assist in manning the rest of our Navy. It is expected that you contend warmly on all necessary occasions for the honor of the American Flag. At every foreign port you enter salute their Forts, and wait on the Governor, General or Commander in chief, asking liberty of their Ports for the Ships of the United States of America. Take care that your people do not molest their Trade or Inhabitants nor in any shape disturb



that good understanding we have with them. We think you should not only attempt to get seamen at every port you touch at, but also encourage them to enter from every Prize you take, and if amongst these you should number any of the British ships of war, you must be particularly attentive to prevail on the most useful Petty & Warrant officers to engage in our Service—the encouragement for them is great and we want them much. When your errand to the West Indies is compleated you are to return to some Port in these states.

The uncertainty of the state of war and the stations the enemy may choose for their large Ships makes it improper we should fix positively on any one particular, but as it is likely those middle states may be the Seat of war the nearer you can land the stores to our Army the better. It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he will use his officers and people well, still preserving Strict discipline and decorum, that prisoners be treated with humanity, that great care be taken of the ships, their materials & stores, and that due attention be paid to the private Instructions of the Navy Board. We are Sir,

Your very hble Servts

P. S. You have herewith signals whereby to know the American ships of war.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> But see also Marine Committee to James Nicholson, April 29, 1777, note.

## Benjamin Rush's Notes

April 8. 1777

The declaration of independance [first?] was said to have divided & weakned the colonies. The contrary of this was the case. Nothing but the signing, & recognizing of the declaration of independance preserved the Congress from a dissolution in Decemr 1776 when Howe marched to the Delaware. Maryland had instructed her delegates to concur in an Accommodation notwithstanding *any measure* (meaning independance) to the contrary. But further the declaration of independance produced a secession of tories, timid, moderate & double minded men from the counsels of America in consequence of which the congress as well as each of the states have possessed ten times the vigor and strength they had formerly.

April 8th 1777

Genl. Howe's army at Brunswick & New York is now in Motion. A majority of the people of Philada. think that their destination is up the North river in order to join Genl. Carleton so as to cut off the communication between the Eastern & Southern states agreeably to the original plan of the British ministry. But I think it most probable that their object

is Philada. for the following reasons. 1. Because it is obviously agst. the interest of Howe's army to come to Philada. and a ignorance of their true interest is the only thing that has appeared like uniformity in their conduct. 2ly. The design of the present war is to chastise the people of America, and this can only be done by changing the seat of war & 3ly. To purify it of toriism and to eradicate timi[di]ty & moderation. This can only be done by Howe's coming within the sphere of the attraction of the tories & moderate men. 4ly. There is a false confidence in the situation & Strength of the city of Philada, and in the Spirit & number of our troops. The same kind of confidence prevd. in New York before its reduction last year.

April 8th 1777

I think it more than probable that General Washington will not Close the present war wth G Britain.

1. Because in ordinary revolutions different characters always appear in their first and last stages.

2. Because his talents are better fitted to unite the people of America into one body than to give them Afterwards a national complexion.

3. Because his talents are unequal to those degrees of discipline, and decision which alone can render an army finally successful.

4. Because he is idolized by the people of America, and is tho't to be absolutely necessary for us to enable us to carry on the war.

MS (PPL). In the hand of Benjamin Rush. This entry consists of three separate passages contained in a small booklet of miscellaneous notes and follows a discussion of the political opinions of the American people during the revolution. Each of the three passages is explicitly dated April 8, 1777; they begin on pages 10, 12, and 14, respectively, of the booklet. Between the first and second are written notes on the appearance of an Indian delegation before Congress, which have been printed above under the date December 5, 1776. For information on the use previously made of the material in this booklet, see Rush's Notes of Proceedings in Congress, December 5, 1776, note 1.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. April 9th. 1777.

Yesterday Evening the Congress compleated the Business of the Medical Department, and on so large and liberal an Establishment that we may certainly expect the most beneficial Effects will flow from it. Every Encouragement is given to Gentlemen of Skill and Reputation in that Art to enter into our Army, and a Variety of Regulations adopted to carry the Plan more effectually into Execution. As I have the Honour of enclosing the Resolves on this Subject, I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them.<sup>1</sup>

It is with particular Pleasure I transmit the Resolution of Congress directing Monuments to be erected to the Memory of Major General Warren and Brigadier General Mercer.<sup>2</sup> Every Mark of Distinction shewn to those illustrious Men who offer up their Lives for the Liberty and Happiness of Mankind, reflects the highest Honour upon those who pay the Tribute, and by holding up to others the Prospects of Fame and Immortality, will animate them to tread in the same Path. I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Respect & Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.<sup>3</sup>

John Hancock Prest.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> These resolves are in *JCC*, 7:231–37, 244–46.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:242–43.

<sup>3</sup> On this day Hancock also wrote to Jonathan Hudson of Baltimore: "Your Favour of the 4th Inst I duely received and communicated the same to Congress, in Consequence of which they passed an Order for twenty Thousand Dollars to be advanced to you. I enclose to you a Warrant for the Money on the Treasurer at Baltimore and am, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Sert." PCC, item 12A, fol. 180–81; and *JCC*, 7:238.

## Mann Page to John Page

Dear Brother

Philadelphia April 9th 1777

I am much obliged to you for your Congratulation upon my Recovery from the S. Pox, which I should have acknowledged before this, if I had not been unfortunately detained on the Road between Baltimore & Philadelphia for more than three Weeks by my Wife's Illness. I did not get to this Place 'til Monday Evening, & am now so much unsettled that I have hardly time to write. Lodgings are with difficulty to be procured, & I fear a House cannot be had at any Rate so that I expect to be forced to put up with a Tavern. Genl. Howe keeps this divided City in constant Fear. Many wish for his coming, & many others are too timid to oppose it. If he should attempt it, which is the Opinion of several of our Generals, we must again fly; for Genl. Washington has not a Force sufficient to oppose him. It is my Opinion however that his Design is to get Possession of the North River, which appears to me to be of more real Consequence to him than this Place. Up the N. River he will at present meet with but little Oppisition. Philadelphia he cannot keep against a superior Army. Genls. Green & Putnam<sup>1</sup> mention his having collected a Number of Transports & Boats at Amboy, with a View, as they think to bring his Troops round by Water to this Place; but this I look upon to be done only to conceal his real Design upon the N. River. A few Days will make us certain what their Intentions are. They are moving Part of their Troops from Brunswick to Amboy, so that if we had any thing of an Army they might be

destroyed. What would you think of sparing for a little Time the three Regiments belonging to the State? They are, I am informed, well armed & cloathed. If we had them now they would be of infinite Service. Could we but destroy the present Army, we need not fear any Reinforcements of Russians which they might receive. By the Post I shall be able probably to inform you of something of Consequence. Excuse me to Mann for not answering his Letter, which I will do as soon as I have time, & beg him to accept of the Ovid which you have belonging to me, & to remember that it is a Reward for his Merit. Inform him that I shall be happy to give him the like frequent Proofs of my Approbation of his great Progress. Please to give our Love to my Sister. I am, dear Brother, yours affectionately,

Mann Page Junr.

RC (NjMoHP).

<sup>1</sup> Israel Putnam's April 8 letter is in PCC, item 159, fols. 57-58. For Congress' response to this intelligence, see Committee of Congress to George Washington, April 10, 1777.

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir,

Philadelphia April 9th. 1777

Capt. Niles of the Spy was here last Saturday. He Said That there were a number of the Enemy's Ships of War in Chesepeak Bay So that he could not go to Virginia, That he wanted 750 Dollars toward paying for a Cargo of Flour which he had purchased upon which I moved Congress to Advance to the State of Connecticut one thousand Dollars which was Granted,<sup>1</sup> and I delivered 750 of them to Captain Niles and he drew a Bill on your Honr. for payment. The whole is Charged to the State and I must acct for it when I return home. Nothing very material has occurred here Since my last. Congress has passed Some Resolutions for regulating a Hospital in the army which will be published in the News Papers.<sup>2</sup> All the States are now Represented, and next Monday is assigned for considering the Articles of Confederation.<sup>3</sup> I wish there was a more full representation from our State. Congress received a Letter from Dr. Franklin, Arthur Lee & Silas Dean dated about the 27th of January. It does not contain any thing material more than what has been published in the News Papers. They have been offered a loan of Two million Livres without Interest payable after the United States are settled in Peace and Safety which they Gratefully accepted for the use of the States & 500,000 Livres has been received. All ranks favour our cause. It was not certainly known to them whether a war between Gr Britain & France would be Soon Declared. I am informed by Mr. Duer a Delegate from the State of New York that Governor Franklin is very busy with the Tories and has de-



livered out a number of Protections from General How and that any person can obtain a Protection in Connecticut, that this is publickly known there and no measures taken to prevent it. I received a Letter from a Friend Yesterday informing me that the Assembly has repealed the Law prescribing an Oath of Fidelity which I was very Sorry to hear.<sup>4</sup> I expect a recommendation will soon be made by Congress to all the States to administer an Oath not only to the officers & Electors, but to all Suspected persons as a Test to discriminate between Friends & foes. I esteem our internal enemies much the most dangerous. The people on the New Hampshire Grants have Petitioned Congress to be acknowledged an Independent State, and admitted to Send Delegates to Congress. The Convention of New York has also remonstrated against their proceedings, requesting Congress to interpose for preventing the defection of the people on the Grants from that State. Nothing has been yet acted on the affair. The recruiting Service does not go on here so fast as could be wished. In Virginia I understand their Battalions are about two thirds full, in the Carolinas near full. It is Strange that we can't muster an army of fifteen thousand from all the States. I Suppose that number would now be Sufficient to Subdue the Enemy's force in New Jersey.

It Seems to me the Spirit of true Patriotism declines, a Spirit of Selfishness & Oppression prevails.

The Convention of Committees for the Middle States is broke up without doing any thing to remedy the evils attending the high & fluctuating prices of articles.

A Vessel has lately arrived here from Sweden with Arms & Ammunition. I hope two of the Connecticut Delegates are on their way for this place before now. I should have wrote to them, but have long expected that they were coming here, & So would probably miss of receiving my letters. I Should be Glad to return home for a Short time, but cant, before more Members arrive.

I am with the greatest respect Your Honor's Obedient humble Servant,  
Roger Sherman

RC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:226.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:231-37, 244-46.

<sup>3</sup> Although April 14 was appointed for consideration of the articles of confederation, no evidence has been found to indicate that the debate was resumed before April 21. See *JCC*, 7:240, 287.

<sup>4</sup> An act requiring freemen and officers to take an oath of fidelity to the state was originally enacted during the October 1776 session of the Connecticut Assembly. It was repealed during the December 1776 session and subsequently reenacted during the May 1777 session. *A Historical Collection, from Official Records, Files, &c., of the Part Sustained by Connecticut, during the War of the Revolution*, comp. Royal R. Hinman (Hartford: E. Gleason, 1842), pp. 231-32, 253, 268.

## Oliver Wolcott to Andrew Adams

Sir,

Philadelphia 9t. April 1777

I Wrote to you the 22d Ultimo since which I have recd no Letter from you, but I do not think this a Circumstance of that Consequence as that it ought to prevent my Writing to you again, for as I know your Ability to pay, I need not be concerned how much I got you in my Debt especially as I hope you will be well disposed to answer the Obligation.

I find my Friends imagine that they ought not to Write till they have got what they call proper Materials for a Letter. This I think is a Very great Mistake for I think a Letter may be Very well Wrote without either Materials or Invention. I take it to be a Maxim in the Business of Letter Writing and I think it is a Very good one, that the Subject and Mode of Letter Writing ought to be as near as possible to common Conversation, this you Very Well know may be carryed on forever without either Meaning or Intention. I hope therefore that you will not Omit Writing to Me, till you may have heard of some great political Event and not mention that neither because you may suppose that I must hear of it sooner than you can tell Me. Possibly you may have before long a better excuse for not Writing to me oftener, as you may hear of the Movement of the Enemy and so fear least your Letters might fall into their Hands. They are doubtless meditating Mischief at all Times and it seems not unlikely that may pretty soon endeavour to put a Design of this kind into Execution.

Howe has ordered his officers to be at their Station by to Morrow, he is fortifying Brunswick tho he has sent off a Very considerable Part of the Troops which he had there to Amboy. The Army of the Enemy are principally collected at Staten Island tho a comparable Number of them it is said are Embarked. Howe I imagine thinks it to be a matter of Moment to Exert himself before More of our Forces are collected. Many Think that this principal Object is this City, it may be so, tho' I rather doubt wheither this be his principal Design, a Feint may be made this Way, but I will not trouble you with Conjecture, the Enemy will probably explain their Designs. As a War in Europe may be soon expected and as our own military Establishment may be soon respectable, the Enemy Wish to avail themselves of what may be in their Power before those Events take Place. Our Army is Encreasing dayly, and if the Enemy do not get an advantage Very soon they will probably not get it another time. But the Collecting an Army seems to be a slower Peice of Business than one ought to Expect. How affairs in the Recruiting Way have gone on in Connecticut I have not been particularly informed, tho I hope their Battalions may by this Time be full. Many of the Recruits I hope are already thro with the small Pox and on their Way to Camp. But however I will not Conjecture what the State of our Troops are any more than I will of the Designs of the Enemy, for I gain no kind of

Intelligence from Connecticut but what I get by the publick Prints. I beleive that as the small Pox is amongst our People they are forbid Writing least they should communicate the Infection. But whatever be the Cause the Fact is so. I am Very glad that I have Reason to think that some of my Freinds are alive as I do not find that Watson has enrolled them amongst the Dead. But wheither it is his Practice to put down such for Dead as I should think it proper for him to do in Case they are really and not figuratively Dead, I am not able to Say.

My best Compliments to Mrs Adams and Friends, and be assured that I am, sir, your most Obedient, humble Servant

Oliver Wolcott

P.S. Your Letter of the 16t Janry contained much usefull Information, my Observations do no otherwise respect you than that I think I might have recd. several Letters from you since. I should have Wrote to you oftener, but my Situation has not been altogether Stationary, and sometimes Business has prevented. I do not sir Correct my Letters, and I hope you will candidly receive them as they are.

RC (PPRF).

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 9th April 1777

I flattered myself that by the Post which is now in from the Eastward I should have heard Wheither you and the Family had recovered of the small Pox. Your own Sickness and that of the Family I conceive might prevent your Writing to me, but why no Friend in Litchfield could not have given Me the Satisfaction to let me know the State of my Family I cannot say. I suppose they must be most eagerly engaged in some most Momentous Pursuit, Otherwise I am Very sure they could not fail in oblidging me so much as to put a Letter of the Length of three Lines which is as long as I shall insist upon, if it is Wrote upon the Subject that I am most concerned to know, which is how my Family are. I say that if Business of great Consequence did not hinder they would so farr gratify me as to put a Letter of the aforesaid Length into the Post office at Hartford from which I should undouptedly receive it within a Week after it was lodged there. But if you do not now enjoy Health I pray God that you may soon have it and that you will as no other will undertake the Task let me know how the Family are. I shall Endeavour to Write to you every Week. I hope you receive my Letters. I notice on every one such as I have sent before that which is then Written so that you might know when you receive all of them. My three last were of the 15t and 22d March and 1t of this Month.<sup>1</sup>

By the Blessing of God I enjoy Health, which is more than I could have much Reason to expect in this confined Way of living. And as to News I mentioned what had Occurred in my Letter to Mr Reeve of the 3d instant since which nothing Material has happened. The Enemy are meditating some movement, what that will be will soon perhaps be discovered. They doubtless Wish to come to this City but wheither they will Risque an Attempt of this kind can only be the Subject of Conjecture. American Affairs undoubtedly bear a better Aspect than they did a few Months past and a fortunate consequential Blow on our part, might nearly settle the present dispute. God grant that this insolent barbarous Enemy may be spedily curbed and that the happy Days of Peace may Return. But at all Events the Freedom of this Country must be established which can never be done but by establishing the Independancy of it. The Probability of that is so great, that scarcely the least Degree of Doubt can remain respecting the Accomplishing of it. But if the Blessing is bestowed which I fully beleive it will be, the Favour will be granted to a People who in no respect may be said to deserve it, except on Acco. of the Injuries which they receive from Britain, for as to the Morals and Virtue of this People I beleive they have for a long time been upon a most rapid decline.

My Letter from Dr. Smith of the 12t ult was that all the Family were out of Danger on Acco. of the small Pox but that Mariana had had it Very hard, which is unusual for People who are inoculated. This was owing perhaps to some Accident. I wish to know wheither she is like to suffer any ill and lasting Impression in Consequence of the Disease.

You may expect that I should say something in regard to my Returning Home, which at present I do not know what to inform you of. I trust the affairs of America will soon put on a brighter Face and I hope will make a favourable Crisis before long, and whenever that shall be the Case I shall most gladly Wish to enjoy the Sweets of domestick Happiness. But as I have had so much Service to go thro with in this important Dispute I should be glad to See more clearly the probable End of it before I leave the Service. However I have not settled this matter in my own mind at present. It is said that Col. Dyer and Williams will soon be here, if so my continuance will not be supposed Necessary and I shall therefore consider it as merely optionable and shall do what I judge may be proper. I sometimes Wonder that I should trouble you with so long Letters as I do. I would not have you think that I am Fool enough to suppose my Letters of any Consequence. I Write just what occurs to me Very much to gratify myself. I am in the Condition of great Talkers who never Think any Body is tired of hearing them while they feel themselves so much pleased with their own tattle. After I have Wrote three or four sides down I then look over my Letter and blot out and interline so as to make it in any Degree intilligible. This Letter will go to you I dare say in that Condition and I beleive it is time to put it in that form.



There are a Thousand Questions which I want to ask, but which I shall never have answered till I return home—and so I will not trouble you with them. Perhaps I may Write a Letter to somebody at Litchfield by this Post. I beleive I shall, tho I owe them no Letters, yet it may put them into a Way of not expecting a formal Letter to every one which they send Me. If they are afraid that there Letters will Miscarry they can Write upon any general Subject, which may give Me a great deal of particular Information tho' it never can our Old Foe Howe. But I will look over my Letter and so Adieu this Time. May the best of Heavens Blessings be yours. My love to My Children and Freinds. Yours inviolably,  
Oliver Wolcott

P.S. Since I Wrote the above, I am well informed that Howe is fortifying Brunswick while at the same time he has been sending off to Amboy a large part of the Troops which he had there. All Officers in the British service are strictly ordered to their post by the tenth inst. The British Army are principally collected at Staten Island. Many Circumstances Evidence some important Design of theirs to be soon put into Operation which it must be left to time to discover.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wolcott's March 15 letter to Laura has not been found.

## Committee of Congress to George Washington

Sir,

Philadelphia April 10, 1777

In obedience to an order of Congress we do ourselves the honor to inform your Excellency of the reasons and principles that have governed Congress in their resolution for forming a Camp on the west side of Delaware.<sup>1</sup> The repeated information that hath been received of the enemies movements, and it being the opinion of your Excellency, as well as of many other General Officers, that this City was the Object of such movements, rendered it proper that means should be fallen upon, to prevent the success of such a design, as well to guard against the bad impression that it would certainly have on the affairs of America in general, as to give security to the valuable Stores here collected, and which cannot speedily be removed.

It has been considered that if the real design of the enemy should be against this City, the Troops are here well fixed, and will be an encouraging place of resort to the Militia of this State in their present unfixed condition, being between their old plan of association, and their new, but yet unexecuted, law. On the other hand, should the design of the enemy be upon Hudsons river, or more eastward, the Troops here may with ease

reach that river, before those now at Head Quarters can have all crossed it. But other considerations remain, and they are, should the enemy continue in Jersey with a view to attack your Army, or should your Excellency mean to make a decisive impression on them when your numbers are sufficient, in either supposition, the Troops ought not to be here. And therefore, in the whole of this business, Congress means not, in any manner, to interfere with the designs, or to counteract the Judgement of your Excellency, but wish you freely to call up to Head Quarters, all, or any part of the Troops encampt here as you shall please. It is not supposed that this will occasion any delay, and will certainly prevent the injuries that would be derived to the Troops, as well in health as discipline, from their entering and remaining any time in this City.

We are, with sentiments of much esteem, Your Excellencies most obedient humble servants,

Richard Henry Lee

Geo. Clymer

John Adams

Abra. Clark

RC (MdBj-G). Written by Richard Henry Lee and signed by Lee, Adams, Clark, and Clymer.

<sup>1</sup> In response to intelligence concerning enemy troop movements, contained in Gen. Israel Putnam's April 8 letter, Congress appointed a committee on the ninth to recommend measures for opposing an attack on Philadelphia and to confer with Pennsylvania officials. The Pennsylvania Council agreed to meet with the committee that evening, and as a result of the committee's recommendations several resolves, including one for establishing a camp on the west bank of the Delaware, were passed on the tenth and the committee was directed to inform Washington of the reasons for Congress' action. See *JCC*, 7:246-47, 250-51; and *Pa. Council Minutes*, 11:202-3. Washington's response to this letter, in which he recommended that troops be collected at Bristol, Pa., and forwarded to headquarters, is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:400-402. For Congress' subsequent action, see *JCC*, 7:270-71; and Richard Henry Lee to Washington, April 16, 1777.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir

Philadelphia 10th April 1777.

Your favr. of yesterday's Date I have just Rec'd by the Return Express and shall be laid before Congress to morrow morning.<sup>1</sup>

I have only time to Inclose you sundry Resolutions pass'd in Congress since my last, to which I request yor Attention.<sup>2</sup> I also inclose you a Letter from the Come. of Congress.

I have the Honour to be with Esteem, Sir, Your most Obedt Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] I have Sent four Bundles of printed Resolves, which you will please to order to be distributed among the Officers.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 152, 4:65–66, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:380–81.

<sup>2</sup> These were resolves of this date on setting up a camp west of the Delaware, Washington's appointments, troop pay, frontier defense, and the rank and pay of muster officers. *JCC*, 7:250–52.

<sup>3</sup> Hancock sent Washington a broadside printed by John Dunlap containing resolves of April 1, 2, 9, and 10 on military pay. *JCC*, 7:214–15, 217–18, 248–49, 252. A photocopy of this broadside is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), vol. 7, facing p. 388.

## Francis Lightfoot Lee to George Washington

Dear Sir,

Philadelphia April 10th. 1777

I am very sorry that I was not in this City when General Green was here; nothing cou'd give me greater pleasure, than to have an opportunity of shewing every respect & civility to a Gentleman who so justly possesses your esteem.

It gives me pain, that you are joined by so few of the new levies. There are great complaints to the southward, against the recruiting officers, which I fear are too well grounded; gaming in particular is said to prevail to a scandalous height, than which nothing is a more deadly foe to business. I hope however you will soon be enabled to meet the Enemy on any ground. I sincerely wish you health and happiness, & am Dear Sir, Your very obt. & hble. Servant,

Francis Lightfoot Lee

RC (MH-H).

## Richard Henry Lee to George Washington

My dear General

Philadelphia 10 April 1777

The resolves of Congress that you will receive by this Messenger, you may be assured, are not intended, by any means, to obstruct your views a single moment.<sup>1</sup> If your judgment should incline you to think that the Troops had better march on to Head Quarters quick as possible, you have only so to order it, and it will give pleasure to every good man here. The business of speedily reenforcing you will not be obstructed, but accelilated, because they now enter the City, where every days stay is 30 days injury to the great purpose of strengthening your hands. And should the enemy destine here, something like a military collection, may produce a greater resort. If you will indulge my conjecture, I think they cannot purpose coming here, because the water securities against such a plan are realy formidable, and the situation of the land, where the water obstructions are fixed, is such, that great delay, and probable ruin forbids the enterprize,

as they cannot so fix land Batteries as to remove the strong Vessels that protect the Cheveaux de Frize, added to the numerous fire rafts & Fire ships that in a narrow water with strong current may destroy their Fleet. Your Army Sir feeble as it is, and the North River, are more tempting Objects, because they are not strong, and because the defeat of the one, or the acquisition of the other, would avail our enemies greatly.

My wishes are Sir, and I think they correspond with the true interest of America, that you should quickly be possessed of a strong Army, that your powers might be such as to gratify your wishes of crushing of our enemies before an addition of strength to them may render the business more difficult & uncertain. I think I well know your situation and from your excellent disposition, I know your feelings, and I do most ardently wish to make the former good, and to render the latter agreeable, and therefore, whenever I can know either from yourself all the powers I possess shall be exerted to accomplish both. The Troops of Maryland are now under inoculation, and so are about 1000 Virginians from Baltimore to Wilmington inclusive. Here, we suppose, may be near a thousand of all kinds, who by the now plan of encampment, will be in Tents as quickly as the Physicians can discharge them, or the Officers collect them from this attractive Scene of debauch and amusement.

With every hearty wish for your health and prosperity I remain, dear Sir Most affectionately yours,  
Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> See Committee of Congress to Washington, this date, note.

## Philip Schuyler to Thomas Wharton

Sir

Philadelphia April 10t. 1777.

The Honorable Continental Congress having ordered me to carry into Execution their Intensions conveyed in the inclosed Resolutions, My total Ignorance of the Country renders it necessary that I should immediately take Measures for obtaining the requisite Information. I must therefore beg the Favor of an early Conference with your Excellency and Council of Safety on that and other Matters. If I can be honored with a Conference you will please to signify the Time and place to Major Rensselaer my aid de Camp, who waits on you for that purpose.<sup>1</sup> I am Sir, very respectfully, Your Excellency's most obdt. hble Servant,

Ph. Schuyler

LB (NN). Addressed: "To his Excellency Thomas Wharton Esqr., President of the State of Pennsylvania."

<sup>1</sup> The resolves enclosed by Schuyler were passed on April 10 and directed him to take certain steps to repel a reported British advance on Philadelphia. *JCC*,



7:250–51. For the origins of this minor crisis and the effect it had on Congress' relations with the government of Pennsylvania, see Committee of Congress to George Washington, April 10, note; and William Duer to the New York Convention, April 17, 1777, note 1. Schuyler, who had returned to Congress on April 7 seeking vindication of his conduct as commander of the northern military department, was acting in a dual capacity as delegate from New York and commander of the Continental forces in Philadelphia. Despite dissatisfaction with Schuyler among a significant number of delegates, particularly those from New England, Congress gave him this command because the military exigencies of the moment seemed to require the services of an officer of his rank and experience. See *JCC*, 7:230, 251, 255, 271, 298; and Schuyler's Memorial to Congress, May 6, 1777.

## James Sykes to George Read

Dear Sir,

Philadelphia April 10th. 1777

Yesterday it was agreed in Congress that the subject of the Articles of Confederacy should be taken up on Monday next and that two days in each week should be employed therein until that work should be compleated. As this is a matter of the utmost importance it is certainly necessary that our State should be fully represented, especially as I am by no means competant to the task. I therefore most ardently wish you would give your attendance in Congress and beg you would write to Mr. Vandike, pressing his immediate repair hither.<sup>1</sup> I am in a most disagreeable situation, a stranger to every person, unable to speak my sentiments in Congress and no Coleague to confer with on any subject that may concern our State.<sup>2</sup> There has already a matter been determined which I am afraid will throw the whole County of Sussex into confusion and disorder. I think it is a report from the board of War that an Independant Company shall be raised in that County to be stationed at Lewis Town, that Harry Fisher shall have the Command, if he refuses that he shall have at least the appointment of the Subaltern Officers. This was brought in immediately upon my taking my seat in Congress and tho I utterly disapproved the measure as far as it respected Fisher, I could not open my mouth in objection. This, Sir, shews the necessity of some person being here who has the inclination and power to object to and shew the impropriety of such appointments. I am totally unfit for it and am miserable on the occasion. From what we hear from Head Quarters it seems to be the prevailing opinion there that the Enemy intend to Philadelphia in a very short time, that the Fleet are coming into this River and their Boats are preparing for the Army to cross the same.

I should be exceeding sorry to press you on a subject that I know at this Time is disagreeable, I mean your attendance here, but it appears to me to be indispensably necessary to our State that you should be in Congress, with respect to myself it is so much so that without your at-

tendance I cannot think of staying, alone I will not. I hope you will excuse this incoherent schrall. Please to present my best Compliments to Mrs. Read. It would give me great pleasure to receive a Line from you. I am in the mean time Dr. Sir Your Most Obedient Humble Servt.

James Sykes

RC (DeHi).

<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Van Dyke had notified Read, in an April 7 letter, that his departure for Congress would be delayed. "I am pleased to hear Mr. Sykes is gone to Congress, the very distressing Dispensation of Providence to me since I see you; and the unavoidable Necessity I have thereby been reduced to, has hitherto prevented my leaving Home, nor can I possibly go untill the first of the Week after Next." George Read Papers, DeHi; and William Thompson Read, *Life and Correspondence of George Read, A Signer of the Declaration of Independence . . .* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co., 1870), p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> Despite Sykes' complaint, Read had attempted to make Sykes' arrival in Congress less difficult, as his April 1, 1777, letter of introduction to James Wilson demonstrates. "I take the liberty to introduce the bearer James Sykes Esquire to your acquaintance. He is one of my Colleagues in the delegation from this State. He goes up to attend the Congress where I beg you will introduce him to the Members occasionally and you will do me a favour to treat him as my friend. I know not that I shall see you shortly unless you will take a stroll here some holliday or Saturday afternoon. . . . Remember to introduce Mr. Sykes to your Colleagues, Mr. R. Morris in particular." Gratz Collection, PHI.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 11 [1777]

Congress is now full. Every one of the thirteen States has a Representation in it, which has not happened before a long Time.

Maryland has taken a Step which will soon compleat their Quota. They have made it lawfull for their Officers, to inlist servants and Apprentices.

The fine new Frigate, called the Deleware, Capt. Alexander, has sailed down the River. I stood upon the Wharf to see the fine figure and Show she made. They are fitting away the Washington, Captn. Reed [Read], with all possible dispatch.

We have at last finished the System of Officers for the Hospitals, which will be printed Tomorrow. As soon as it is done, I will inclose it to you. A most ample, generous, liberal Provision it is. The Expençe will be great. But Humanity overcame Avarice.<sup>1</sup>

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:203-4. A continuation of John Adams to Abigail Adams, April 8, 1777.

<sup>1</sup> Congress' April 7-8 resolutions reorganizing the medical service were printed as a broadside by John Dunlap of Philadelphia. See *JCC*, 7:231-37, 244-46; and Evans, *Am. Bibliography*, no. 15660.

## Medical Committee to Jonathan Potts

Sr.

Philadelphia 12th April 1777

Your Letter directed to the medical Committee in Congress with the inclosed returns of Medicines, Stores & sick in the Hospitals at Albany & Ticonderoga came safe to hand this day.

We are highly pleased with your having the prospect of a sufficient supply of medicines in your department for the ensuing Campaign, & approve of the returns you have made us.

Your proposal of keeping the Small Pox out of the Garrison at Ticonderoga we think extremely proper & hope you will carefully attend to its execution.

Congress have just finished a new plan and arrangement of the medical department in the Army. It is ordered to be published immediately. As you will soon be possessed of the whole plan, we shall only inform you at present, that your appointment of Director of the northern department is renewed; the pay 5 dols. & 6 rations per diem.<sup>1</sup> Senior surgeons 4 dols. & 5 rations a day. Regimental Surgeons 2 dols. & 4 rations a day. The pay of every other rank in proportion. As handsome sallaries are now allowed, we expect none but persons of the best abilities will be employed or suffered to remain in your service as Hospital or regimental Surgeons, & that you will strictly superintend every branch of the medical department under your charge.

We greatly approve of your scheme of a Garden for supplying the troops with Vegetables which we judge will contribute much towards preserving their health. Should forward you some seeds but think you can procure them nearer hand.

We hope to hear from you by every convenient opportunity.

By Order of the Medical Committee, I have the Honor to be, Sir,  
your very Hble Sert. M. Thornton

RC (PHi). Written and signed by Matthew Thornton. Addressed: "To Doctor Jonathan Potts Director of the Military Hospitals In the Northern Department."

<sup>1</sup> For the hospital reorganization, see *JCC*, 7:231-37, 244-46; and John Adams to Abigail Adams, April 11, 1777, note.

## Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings

April 12, 1777.

Present Morris, Col. Lee, Col. Whipple. Capn. Jermh. Morgan of the sloop Mary, laid before the Come, his Acct. Currt. charging the valuat[i]o[n] insurd on the sd. sloop as by charter party made with Silas Deane Esqr., on behalf of the States, at Bermuda, together with disbursments pd in France, wages &c also a protest of the seizure of sd. sloop by the Enemy, as

appears fully by sd. Acct. currt. & Protest.<sup>1</sup> An order was drawn on Mr. Morris for 160 dills in part paymt. of the ballance due to him, & as the remain[de]r [of the] ballance shoud be pd. in Bermuda per agreemt. yet as the Come. have no funds in that place, it is agreed to give Bills of Exchge on France for the same. Accordingly a Sett was drawn on Messrs. Sl. & J.H. Delap Merchts. at Bordeaux in favor of sd. Morgan, for £654.5.11 sterlg. at 60 days sight Exchge 150 per Cent being the full amount of the balance due him on Acot.

MS (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> The *Mary* had been taken by H.M.S. *Lively* on November 1, 1776. Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:10.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Sunday April 13, 1777

Enclosed with this you have a Correspondence, between the two Generals, concerning the Cartell for the Exchange of Prisoners.

Washington is in the Right, and has maintained his Argument with a Delicacy, and a Dignity, which do him much Honour.<sup>1</sup>

He has hinted, at the flagitious Conduct of the two Howes, towards their Prisoners, in so plain and clear a manner, that he cannot be misunderstood; but yet a decency and a Delicacy is preserved which is the more to be applauded, because the natural Resentment of such Atrocious Cruelties renders it very difficult to avoid a more pointed Language, in describing them. They might indeed, without much Impropiety, have been painted in crimson Colours of a deeper Die.

If Mr. Howes Heart is not callous, what must be his Feelings, when he recollects the Starvings, the Freezings, the pestilential Diseases, with which he coolly and deliberate[ly] destroyed the Lives of so many, unhappy Men. If his Conscience is not seared, how will he bear its Lashes when he remembers his Breach of Honour, his Breach of Faith, his offence against Humanity, and Divinity, his Neighbour and his God, if he thinks there is any such Sumprême Being, in impairing Health that he ought to have cherished, and in putting an End to Lives that he ought to have preserved, and in choosing the most slow, lingering and torturing Death, that he could have devised?

I charitably suppose, however, that he would have chosen the shortest Course and would have put every Man, to the Sword or Bayonett, and thereby have put an End to their Sufferings, at once, if he could have done it without Detection. But this would have been easily proved upon him, both by his Friends and Enemies. Whereas, by Hunger, Frost and Disease, he might commit the Murders, with equal Certainty, and yet be able to deny that he had done it. He might lay it to Hurry, to Confusion, to the



fault of Commissaries and other Officers. Nay might deny, that they were starved, frozen and infected.

He was determined to put them out of the Way, and yet to deny it, to get rid of his Enemies, and yet save his Reputation. But his Reputation is ruined forever.

The two Brothers will be ranked by Posterity with Pizarro, with Borgia, with Alva, and with others in the Annals of Infamy, whose Memories are intitled to the Hisses and Execrations of all virtuous Men.

These two unprincipled Men are the more detestable, because they were in the opposition at home, their Connections, Friendships and Interest lay with the opposition, to the opposition they owed their Rise, Promotion and Importance. Yet they have basely deserted their Friends and Party, and have made themselves the servile Tools of the worst of Men in the Worst of Causes.

But what will not desperate Circumstances tempt Men to do, who are without Principle? and who have a strong aspiring Ambition, a towering Pride, and a tormenting Avarice.

These two Howes were very poor, and they have spent the little Fortunes they had in bribery at Elections, and having obtained Seats in Parliament, and having some Reputation as brave Men, they had nothing to do but to carry their Votes and their Valour to Markett, and it is very true, they have sold them at an high Price.

Are Titles of Honour, the Reward of Infamy? Is Gold a Compensation for Vice? Can the one or the other, give that Pleasure to the Heart, that Comfort to the Mind, which it derives from doing Good? from a Consciousness of Acting, upon upright and generous Principles, of promoting the Cause of Right, Freedom and the Happiness of Men.

Can Wealth or Titles soften the Pains of the Mind upon reflecting that a Man has done Evil, and endeavoured to do Evil to Millions, that he has destroyed free Governments and established Tyrannies!

I would not be an Howe, for all the Empires of the Earth, and all the Riches, and Glories thereof.

Who would not rather be brave, even tho unfortunate, in the Cause of Liberty? Who would not rather be Sydney, than Monk?

However, if I am not deceived, Misfortune as well as Infamy awaits these Men. They are doomed to defeat, and Destruction. It may take Time to effect it, but it will certainly come. America is universally convinced of the Necessity of meeting them in the Field in firm Battallion—and American Fire is terrible.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:207–8.

<sup>1</sup> Washington's correspondence with General Howe about an exchange of prisoners was received by Congress on April 11 and ordered to be published the same day. *JCC*, 7:253. The correspondence appeared in the April 12 issue of the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

April 13. 1777

I have spent an Hour, this Morning, in the Congregation of the dead. I took a Walk into the Potters Field, a burying Ground between the new stone Prison, and the Hospital, and I never in my whole Life was affected with so much Melancholly. The Graves of the soldiers, who have been buried, in this Ground, from the Hospital and bettering House, during the Course of the last Summer, Fall, and Winter, dead of the small Pox, and Camp Diseases, are enough to make the Heart of stone to melt away.

The Sexton told me, that upwards of two Thousand soldiers had been buried there, and by the Appearance, of the Graves, and Trenches, it is most probable to me, he speaks within Bounds.

To what Causes this Plague is to be attributed I dont know. It seems to me, that the Want of Tents, Cloaths, soap, Vegetables, Vinegar, Vaults &c. cannot account for it all.

Oatmeal and Peas, are a great Preservative of our Enemies. Our Frying Pans and Gridirons, slay more than the Sword.

Discipline, Discipline is the great Thing wanted. There can be no order, nor Cleanliness, in an Army without Discipline.

We have at last, determined on a Plan for the Sick, and have called into the Service the best Abilities in Physick and Chirurgery, that the Continent affords. I pray God it may have its desired Effect, and that the Lives and Health of the Soldiers may be saved by it.

Disease has destroyed Ten Men for Us, where the Sword of the Enemy has killed one.

Upon my Return from my pensive melancholly Walk, I heard a Piece of disagreeable News—That the ship Morris, Captain Anderson from Nantz, with Cannon, Arms, Gunlocks, Powder &c. was chased into Delaware Bay by two or three Men of War—that she defended herself manfully against their Boats and Barges, but finding no Possibility of getting clear, she run aground. The Crew, and two French Gentlemen Passengers got on shore, but the Captain, determined to disappoint his Enemy in Part, laid a Train and blew up the ship, and lost his own Life unfortunately in the Explosion. I regret the Loss of so brave a Man much more than that of the ship and Cargo. The People are fishing in order to save what they can, and I hope they will save the Cannon. The French Gentlemen, it is said have brought Dispatches from France to the Congress.<sup>1</sup> I hope this is true. If it is, I will let you know the Substance of it, if I may be permitted to disclose it.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:209–10.

<sup>1</sup>The ship carried several letters, including the February 6, 1777, letter of the Commissioners at Paris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which is in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:261–65. The name of the ship has occasioned considerable confusion, because it was referred to as both the *Morris* and

the *Success*. That both references are to the same ship seems clear from a business letter Robert Morris wrote to Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer explaining the condition of "the muskets saved from the Ship Success (late the Morris) blown up at our Capes." Robert Morris to Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer, May 15, 1777, Red Books, MdAA. See also Samuel Adams to James Warren, April 17, and Secret Committee to Caesar Rodney, April 25, 1777.

Adams' account undoubtedly rested upon Henry Fisher's April 12 letter to the Pennsylvania Board of War describing the incident, which was subsequently published in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette* on April 15 and 16 respectively.

## John Adams to Nathanael Greene

My dear sir

Philadelphia April 13. 1777

In considering a Letter from the General, sometime ago, in the Board of War, it was agreed to report to Congress a Resolution, approving of the Laboratory at Springfield, and such a Report was made, but upon some opposition to it, it was ordered to lye on the Table, where it has lain ever since. I will move to have it taken up and determined. Some Gentlemen will oppose it, particularly the President, I believe, thinking Brookfield the best Place. I am not very clear myself, that it is the best, but from a greater Confidence in the opinion of General Washington and General Knox, than in my own, I voted for it, and shall continue to do so.<sup>1</sup>

I will hazard a Conjecture, concerning the Motions of the Enemy, in which very few here agree with me. I think they are neither to move up Delaware, nor Hudsons River untill they have a Strong Reinforcement. They are turning their Men out upon Staten Island to graze—to breath a fresh keen Air, and to take a Course of Exercise for the Recovery of their Health. Depend upon it, sir, their Army, at this season of the year, is too Sickly, relaxed and unsettled to take the Field, and it is too early if they were healthy, it would lay a foundation for a sickly disastrous Campaign. It is not to be expected that every State will provide their full Quota of Men, nor shall We have occasion for such a Number, unless the Enemy, have a Reinforcement greater than We have any Idea of at present. I can have no Conception of the Necessity of Sixty or seventy thousand Men to oppose an Army of Ten or Eleven thousand, in one Place and another of seven or Eight thousand in another. Our Men are as good as theirs, and I am not afraid to trust them Man for Man. If our officers will not lead their Men I am for Shooting all who will not and getting a new set. It is high Time for Us to abandon this execrable defensive Plan. It will be our Ruin if We do not. Long Lines, and defensive Systems have very near undone Us. Our Men, New England men especially universally detest and despise, defensive operations, and are dispirited by them, in such a manner as to be good for nothing. But they

will follow a spirited enterprising officer any where. We dont understand Sufficiently the Doctrine of Diversions. One Thousand Men upon Long Island would find Employment for three or four Thousand of theirs. So might a few others upon Staten Island. But our Army has ever been such an enormous Mass of Deadness and Torpor, that I dont wonder their Inactivity has bred the Plague among them.

We must have a fighting enterprizing Spirit conjured up in our Army. The Army that Attacks has an infinite Advantage, and ever has had from the Plains of Pharsalia to the Plains of Abraham, the Plains of Trenton and Princeton. I will perish if our Troops behave ill if you lead them on to an attack.

LB (MHi). Endorsed by Adams: "Intended for G. Green but not Sent, being too impolite."

<sup>1</sup>This is apparently a response to Gen. Nathanael Greene's April 5 letter to Adams inquiring about the status of the magazine and laboratory in Massachusetts, which is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

On April 14 Congress repealed its December 27, 1776, resolution to erect a magazine and laboratory at Brookfield, Mass., and voted instead that "a magazine sufficient to contain 10,000 stands of arms, and two hundred tons of gunpowder, and a laboratory adjacent thereto, be erected in Springfield, in the said State." *JCC*, 7:266. For a discussion of the earlier controversy over the location of the magazine and laboratory, see John Adams' Diary, February 21, 1777.

Adams' letterbook also contains the following brief note, perhaps a fragment of an unfinished letter, dated April 16, that was apparently intended for General Greene: "According to your desire in your kind Letter of the fifth instant, I yesterday noon obtained the approbation of C."

## Lewis Morris to John Jay

Dear Jay

Phia April 14th 1777

I did not until this day receive yours of 12 March.<sup>1</sup> I have wrote by almost every opportunity and shall continue so to do as long as I remain at this Place. Just now we had an alarm that the Enemy were coming up the river, I hope and wish the People of this State may act like men. A few days ago I made a motion in Congress that the Congress should direct to be immediately made an Elegant Standard, and on the aproach of the Enemy they should Erect it, and that the Motto should be Conquer or Die, however they did not Seem to like it, in my opinion it would have had a good effect. I am Sorry to Say our army is exceeding weak And I was some time ago for establishing a general and indiscriminate Ballote throughout all the States without any Respect to Rank, Sect of Religion or Profession whatsoever, they seem now to be about doing Something of the kind.<sup>2</sup> I hope when peace comes we shall not have our farms far apart. I am Sure we shall be happy and be good neibours. Aurora did not prove with foald and Mr Lawrence has Sold her for two hundred pounds.



I think you have made Capt Platt a present of the half of your horse, I am Sure he would fetch £150 or more if he was here. Bay Richmond is much admired and I have been offered one thousand pounds. I said my Price was two, he covers here at 20 Dollars the Season, and if Howe does not drive us away he will have a great many Mares.

April 17th

Nine Sail of men of war now in this river, Yesterday an account came up that they had burnt a large Ship belonging to Some Merchts bound out. Last night Livingston and Duane came here, I shall Set of Soon for Esopus. Inclosed you have a Letter I wrote you Some time ago,<sup>3</sup> it was a long time at Morristown and came back again. I Send to Shew that I have not neglected to write. My best regards to all friends, Yours most Sincerely,

Lewis Morris

RC (NNG).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Congress appointed a committee on April 12 to consider ways and means of reforming the recruiting service, but the committee report approved by Congress two days later made no mention of a "Ballote," or any comparable device, for selecting recruits. *JCC*, 7:257, 261-63.

<sup>3</sup> Probably a reference to Morris' letter to Jay of February 15, 1777.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia 14th April 1777

My last respects to you was by Capt Wentworth who was the bearer of \$20,000 from the Secret Committee, since which I have rec'd a letter from Mr Wm Gardner of the 17th ult acknowledging the receipt of the 42,000 per Betten. He also mentions Messrs Wharton's write you that they have not rec'd their money for the Betsey cargo. It's true that they have not, but it's their own fault. I rec'd your orders for paying them at Baltimore and immediately on my arrival here sent to them for their account and desired at the same time they would send for the money. I have sent a second message to them and find they dont want to receive the money, that is they dont want to receive paper money. I have not yet had an opportunity of waiting on them personally but shall do it as soon as possible and tender the money. I can't conceive how you came to form a connection with such infamous Tories; Pennsylvania dont afford a more villainous Tory than T Wharton. However I am determined he shall either receive the money or the reward due to a Traitor.

The Mifflin, Capt Marshall, is taken. The Friends Adventure is I imagine by this time sailed from Baltimore. The Friends Adventure I understand is ready to sail from Baltimore.<sup>1</sup> Miller and a number of other

vessels are still in Chesapeake Bay waiting for an opportunity to get out, both the vessels have not more than 25 tons iron on board and I suppose the 74 gun ship will take 60. I shall write you again in a day or two, in the mean time am with much respect, Yours, Wm Whipple

TR (DLC)

<sup>1</sup> The contradictory nature of these two references to the *Friends Adventure* suggests that the copyist inadvertently repeated the ship's name and perhaps dropped a portion of a line when making the transcription. One of the ships may have been the schooner *Dove*, commanded by James Miller, which Langdon dispatched to Baltimore with the *Friends Adventure* for the Marine Committee. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 7:1292.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

Philadelphia 14th Apl 1777

Yours of the 17th Ult came to hand a day or two ago. I find it had taken a trip to Baltimore thro' some Blunder I suppose of the Post office. I am glad Guns are like to be made in the Massachusetts for the Raliegh, for were they to be depended on from this place I fear it woud be a long time before they woud have them, the furnices are Backward owing to the great difficulty in getting men, and then the Risque in getting them by water is very great that I think the chance is against their being there these six months. Since my last we have receiv'd advice from an agent we have at Martinico that several Privateers are fited out at that place with American Commissions who have taken many British vessels. This gives great uneasiness to the English Govrs. who have remonstrated to the Genl. of Martinico, whose answer is that the Americans fight under their own standard & in their own cause, and if some of the French Subjects are seduced into their service he is not answerable.<sup>1</sup> He, the agent, also says he has seen a confidential letter from a person of high distinction in Paris who says that the American negotiations goes on smothly & that the act of Independence will soon be recognis'd by that Court in the most ample manner. This accot is later then any we have had from our Commissioners but coroborates the last accots from them. I have just heard that a Ship from Nants was chas'd ashore near Cape Henlopen by two of the Enemies Ships. The Capt Blew her up, to prevent her falling into the Enemies hands and unfortunately lost his life. Many of the Goods, its said are saved.

15th. I intended to have given you some intelligence that came in the above ship, as she left France in Feby but have so violent a headake that I cannot possibly Collect my thots and as she brings nothing very material must refer you to my next. Your very affecte Bror. Wm. Whipple

[P.S.] Yours of 30th March is just come to hand.

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> William Bingham's March 15, 1777, letter has not been found, but an extract of it in John Adams' hand is in the New York Society Library. In part Bingham reported: "Several Privateers have been fitted out here, and except the Captains & first Lt. have been manned altogether with Frenchmen; they have made many Captures among the Islands. The English Government complains loudly of this, as a direct Violation of the Peace subsisting between the two Crowns. The General has replied, that he is not answerable for the Conduct of the American Privateers—that they might have seduced some of the subjects of France into their service, but that they fought under their own Standard and in their own Quarrells." See also Whipple to Joseph Whipple, March 27, 1777, note 1.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Dr Sir

April 15th 1777

I am honored with your letters of the 16th & 26th of February, & I have taken the necessary steps relative to the Warrant on the Treasury; & the letters which were inclosed.<sup>1</sup> Col. Blount has not yet arrived here, but he will meet with no difficulty in obtaining the money. I must observe by the by that several bills from Mr Treasurer Ash came to hand before your Warrant, & they were paid on my giving my approbation.

I laid the intelligence you gave me relative to Indian affairs before the Congress, who were just then in deliberation on that subject. Gen Hand, an experienced officer, is ordered to the frontiers to direct the necessary operations for their defence. He has directions to embody the militia of Pennsylvania & Virginia in such numbers & divisions as he shall find necessary, & to repel, or invade the Indians if the circumstances of the war require it. You will be startled at this power: but it was given at the request of Pennsylvania & Virginia, whose peculiar circumstances had made it necessary. Your vigilance, Sir, has anticipated any measures necessary for the security of our frontiers, & as I am better satisfied to rely on your powers for all the Exertions of our State, than to admit extraordinary interpositions of Congress, I contented myself with barely assenting to the measures recommended by Pennsylvania & Virginia, without requiring them to extend to us.<sup>2</sup> While our own militia is to perform the services, I believe it will be most agreeable to my own country, as well as to me, that they should be under the command of our own officers, & under the direction of our own magistrates, especially while your Excellency presides. When I am to consent to the contrary, it must be under express instructions, or when inevitable & very sudden necessity allows no time to consult, & no choice of alternatives; & even then I should rely on such circumstances to excuse me to my candid constituents, but not to justify me to this tribunal. I am sorry for the difficulty you experience in conven-

## IN CONGRESS,

APRIL 14, 1777.

**W**HEREAS the State of Pennsylvania is threatened with an immediate invasion, and, from the adjournment of the Legislative and Executive Authorities of the Commonwealth, it is impracticable to carry into immediate execution many measures of the utmost importance, not only to the safety of this Commonwealth, but likewise to the general welfare of the United States.

Resolved, That it is the indispensable duty of Congress to watch over all matters, (the neglect of which, may, in its consequences, deeply affect the welfare of the United States) till such time as the Legislative and Executive Authorities of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, can resume the regular exercise of their different functions.

Resolved, That his Excellency the President of the Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, be requested forthwith to convene the Legislative and Executive Authorities of this State, in order that proper measures may be pursued for the defence of the same.

Resolved, That a Committee of three be appointed to confer with the President of the Supreme Executive Council, with such other Members of the said Council as can be convened with the Board of War of said State, and with the Delegates of the said State in Congress, concerning the mode of authority which they shall conceive most eligible to be exercised during the recess of the House of Assembly, and the Council, in order that if the same be approved by Congress may be immediately adopted.

The Members chosen, Mr. S. Adams, Mr. S. Duer, and Mr. R. H. Lee.

Extract from the minutes,

CHARLES THOMSON, Secretary.

## IN CONGRESS,

APRIL 15.

The Committee appointed by Congress on the 14th day of April, to confer with the President and Members of the Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the Board of War of said State, and the Delegates representing the same in Congress, concerning the authority which should be deemed eligible to be exercised during the recess of the Council and Assembly, report

That a Conference agreeable to the order of Congress, has been held, when the following Gentlemen were present:

His Excellency Thomas Wharton, jun. Esquire, President of the Supreme Executive Council.

Board of War. Owen Biddle, Esq. Chairman, Joseph Dean, Richard Baciter, John Shee.

Delegates for the State of Pennsylvania in Congress. Robert Morris, James Wilson, Daniel Roberdeau, George Clymer, Esquires.

Committee of Congress. Mr. Samuel Adams, Mr. Richard H. Lee, Mr. Duer.

That it appears clearly to the Members in conference, that the Executive Authority of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is incapable of any exertion, adequate to the present crisis, and that it is of the greatest importance, that every power should be called forth into action, which may conduce to the safety of this State, with which the liberties and property of the whole are so intimately connected. From this consideration, and at the particular instance and request of the President of the Supreme Executive Council and Board of War of the State of Pennsylvania, they beg leave to recommend the following resolutions to be adopted by Congress.

Resolved, That the President of the Supreme Executive Council, of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, together with as many Members of said Council as can be convened, the Board of War, and (in such cases as relate to the marine) the Navy Board of said State should, in the present critical exigency of affairs, exercise every authority to promote the safety of the State, till such time as the Legislative and Executive Authorities of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania can be convened.

Resolved, That it be, and it is hereby earnestly recommended by Congress, to the good people of Pennsylvania, cheerfully to submit to the exertion of an authority which is indispensably essential to the preservation of the lives, liberties and property of themselves, their families, and posterity.

Resolved, That the Commanding Officer of the Continental Forces in this city, afford every possible assistance in carrying into execution all such measures, as may be recommended to him by the authority above-mentioned.

Resolved, That Congress will cheerfully co-operate with the authority above-mentioned, in facilitating every measure which may be deemed conducive to the safety of the State.

Congress taking into consideration the foregoing report,

Resolved, That the same be concurred in, and that the resolutions proposed be agreed to.

Extract from the Minutes,

CHARLES THOMSON, SECRETARY.

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PRINTED BY JOHN DUNLAP.



ing the Gentlemen of your Council. I hope, Sir, they will find more inclination, & less inconvenience, from the result of your Assembly.

I am pleased with your determination to reside in Newbern, if for no other reason but that of facilitating the communication between us. I will not fail to transmit you every thing worth your attention, in the order which I have mentioned & observe in most letters which I have hitherto written: but considering the value of your time, I shall spare you the trouble of unimportant reading.

In your favour of the 26th you have prophesied what has since in a great measure come to pass. All particular jealousies are for the present laid to sleep, & long & uninterrupted may their slumbers be. We are more wisely employed in giving vigor to our military operations, & in correcting abuses in our departments. The success of the recruiting service is not yet very remarkable in the Northern States, notwithstanding the Embargo, to which you allude.<sup>3</sup> Mr S. Adams informs me, from the best authority, that our Lottery tickets have met with a sale amazingly rapid, & that the Loan office is successful.

I am very much concerned for the apprehensions you express relative to the indolence of our officers. Many abuses are complained of from every quarter in the recruiting service, & it is at length found to proceed from the idea that the civil power of the States had no control over them. This is what I had suggested very soon after by arrival at Congress, but it was always reluctantly listened to, until the abuse was complained of from many quarters, & attributed to the same cause. I brought in a Resolution for correcting the abuse through the interventions of the States, & was very happy in finding no opposition made on the old ground. It produced a reference to a Committee, & the result was the Resolutions which the President transmits to you, & of which the inclosed is a copy.<sup>4</sup>

I doubt not your vigorous exertions to root out all the evils in that department, which may be found in the State over which you preside. The Resolution with respect to servants was originally followed by a clause, requiring compensation to be made to owners & masters: but it fell through, on an equal division; those voting against it, who were most interested in the affirmative.<sup>5</sup> The day (viz 15th May) is not well calculated for your State: but that Resolution is expected & intended to have its effect in the States nearer to the field of action, & that day was deemed remote enough for that purpose.<sup>6</sup> Upon the whole, Sir, I hope it will every where have as great effect as it can.

We have for a few days been alarmed here, tho'. I believe, without foundation. No consternation followed upon this occasion, but measures were calmly taken to oppose the Enemy. The Congress are sensible of the impropriety of their last flight, & I believe they will not again fall into the like error. I have added all in my power to confirm them in this disposition, & the timid members have encountered such poignant ridicule from many quarters, that I believe they deem the approach of the

enemy less formidable than another series of the like encounters. I, for my own part, intend to stay in the city, & give my best assistance for its defence, unless it shall be determined to abandon it altogether.

I inclose you the paper of the last date, which contains every intelligence I can give you. The dispatches from France mentioned in it contain little more than that it is the current opinion in Britain, that ten thousand men will be sent the ensuing summer against Virginia & Maryland, under the command of General Burgoin.

You will be pleased to excuse any inaccuracies in this scrawl, which I write in a crowd of disputing Delegates, in the Library adjoining the Congress room.

I have the honor to be, with the greatest esteem & respect, Your Excellency's most obdt Servt,

Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Governor Caswell's letters to Burke are in *N.C. State Records*, 11:392-93, 396-97. Congress had advanced \$500,000 to North Carolina on February 5, and on March 14 it had declared that "the bills drawn by the treasurer of North Carolina on the continental treasury" should be paid out of that sum. *JCC*, 7:92, 176-77.

<sup>2</sup> For the steps taken by Congress on April 9 and 10 to defend the western frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia, see *JCC*, 7:247-48, 252. Caswell's description of Indian problems on the North Carolina frontier is in *N.C. State Records*, 11:393.

<sup>3</sup> Caswell had referred to an embargo on privateering by "the Northern States" in his February 26 letter to Burke. *Ibid.*, p. 396.

<sup>4</sup> Burke was a member of the committee appointed on April 12 to reform the recruiting service, and the report it submitted to Congress two days later is written in his hand. *JCC*, 7:257, 261-63.

<sup>5</sup> See the deleted section on compensation for servants in *JCC*, 7:262.

<sup>6</sup> The April 14 resolves on recruiting stated that if by May 15 the states failed to meet their quotas through the means suggested by Congress, then they ought "to cause indiscriminate draughts to be made from their respective militia." *JCC*, 7:262-63.

## Francis Lightfoot Lee to Landon Carter

Dear Col.

Philadelphia April 15. 1777

Having given Col. Tayloe what little news is stirring here, which I know will be communicated to you; I have only to acknowledge the rect. of several of your favors, for which I am much obliged to you. Your sentimental description is in the hands of Mr. Towne the evening Printer.<sup>1</sup> He has not yet informed me whether he can print it; but I doubt he will be prevented by the many domestic occurrences. I think you are too severe upon the aspring of Popularity, tho I think it wants mending which I fear nothing will do effectually, but the self denying ordinance.

Since my return here, I have again pushed Doctor Bond for the method of granulating Sugar, he has promised faithfully to procure it & I shall take care to remind him of his promise. He mentions a person in N. England who made sugar from the tops of the corn stalk, which yielded him more profit, than all the rest of the corn.

We are threatened to be again driven from this City. It is very troublesome, & I think so disgracefull that I cou'd find in my heart to cut the figure in history, which you some time agoe mentioned, if we cou'd find the body of men; but strange to tell that is now our only want, tho in the long enumeration of wants which we have been used to make, that never entered into the catalogue. Mr. Howe is but in a poor condition, & yet he bullies us, however as there is little prospect of his being soon reinforced, I hope e'er long he will be obliged to look to his own safety, Proper regulations in the different departments are making, that if we ever get an Army, we shall keep it. Our accounts from London say the plan of operations for this campaign is for Howe to demolish the Eastern states, Burgoyne with 10,000 men is to conquer all that borders on Chesapeak while Carlton from Canada subjugates the [middle states?]<sup>2</sup> but most of the troops to effect all [this are to?] be procured & no man in Europe can tell from whence. Not from Russia, the Turk is likely to give her employment. God send, they may soon all get together by the ears, & then we shall be at rest. Our best compts. to Mr. Carter, his Lady & family. Health & happiness attend you my good friend. Francis Lightfoot Lee

RC (ViHi).

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Towne subsequently refused to print Carter's article because of its length. See Lee to Carter, June 8, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> This intelligence was included in the February 6 letter of the commissioners at Paris and Arthur Lee's February 11 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which are in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:261-65, 266-69.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

My dear Sir,

Philadelphia April 15. 1777

The Express who delivered me your favor of March the 28th last<sup>1</sup> and who went on to Jersey, has either forgotten his promise, or not returned, because he has never since called on me.

No person living detests more than I do, the pernicious practise of engrossing, especially the necessities of life. Tis begotten by avarice or inhumanity, and deserves every kind of discouragement. I have spoken to Mr. Morris, and he declares, that so far as he has been concerned, his Agent was directed to purchase for him with view of foreign commerce solely. It must deeply concern every good Man to see our Army collect so slowly, by which instead of crushing the enemy before reenforcements arrive to them, we are still obliged to be on the defensive, having but 3000



to oppose to near 8000. And now they threaten to attack this City, 9 ships of war being already in the Delaware. The Citizens however are in good spirits & say they shall not have the Town. In the mean time their land force remains in its old situation at Brunswick. Two, or three days ago, they made two sorties nearly at the same time, one party attacking our Post at Bon Brook, and another that at Quibble Town. The latter attack was immediately repulsed, but the former succeeded at first, so as to repel our Men & get away 3 field pieces. But a small reenforcement coming up, they were beaten in turn and driven off, leaving 7 dead on the Field. We lost 5 men. I strongly incline to think that they mean only to amuse us and divert our attention from forming an Army, until their succors enable them to take the field and pursue to advantage their original plan of possessing the North river, and joining with Gen. Carleton. Be their designs what they may, it is evidently the business of every State to exert itself for furnishing its Quota of Troops, that an Army formidable may be collected, and sufficient to oppose every attempt. We have now Arms and every other equipment ready for 20,000 Men and the Hospital department is put on the most liberal and judicious plan. Some of the best Medical Men on the Continent are called to act in it, so that we hope this business will now be managed in the best manner and the sick will be taken care of. A fine Ship from Nantes, with powder, arms, & Woolens was the other day chased on shore by two or three Frigates near the Capes of Delaware.<sup>2</sup> The Captain, after bravely defending himself for some time in vain, blowed up his Ship rather than let her fall into the enemies hands. He lost his life, the rest of the Crew was saved, and what is remarkable, a considerable part of the Cargo was driven safely on shore by the exploding effort of the powder, and persons are now employed in securing it. We have intelligence from London, via France, late in Jan., by which we learn that Bankruptcies go on well, two West India Merchants having failed for more than a million, and that the general distress was great. The Merchants tell the Ministry that they lost one million eight hundred thousand pounds sterling by the capture of their Vessels last year. The same accounts tell us that the practises at New York since the enemy got it, exceed everything described in History unless it be the proceedings of the second Triumvirate and give dreadful specimen of what is to be expected where power prevails. It is certain that the refusal of the India Company on account of difficulty and delay alone prevented the Villains from sending American prisoners to the East Indies for Slaves.<sup>3</sup> And that being refused, they were on the verge of sending such of them to Africa as were in England. Yet these are the Men, or Devils rather, that some among us would persuade submission to! For Heavens sake let every nerve be strained to expel them far from North America. They contaminate the Air they breathe. Excuse the length of this letter and believe me to be with affectionate respect, yours,

Richard Henry Lee



RC (Vi). William Wirt Henry, *Patrick Henry, Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1891), 3:64. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> For Henry's March 28 letter, see *ibid.*, 1:515.

<sup>2</sup> The ship *Success*, Capt. James Anderson.

<sup>3</sup> This information was included in Arthur Lee's February 14 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which is in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:270-71.

## Francis Lewis to Robert and Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Sirs

Phila. 15th April 1777

I am favored with yours of the 12th Inst. which I last night laid before the Committee.<sup>1</sup> In that letter you say you had transmitted to the *Board* <sup>2</sup> Inventores of the Materials belonging to the Ship & Brigtn. but no such is come to hand & Mr. Morris tells me he has received none.<sup>3</sup>

Such is the perplexed situation of our affairs at present that nothing can be done relative to the Ships Coals &c for yesterday the alarm Guns were fired as a signal for Nine ships of War comming up the Bay, and Genl. Howes army is in Motion in order to attack this City, in a poor state for defence for the want of Troops. Pray forward all you can from Baltimore, for without reinforcemts. the conquest of this City is inevitable. Therefore it behoves you to turn out all the force you can & speedily or it will be too late. I am Gentlm., Your very Humble Servt,

Fras Lewis

RC (MdHi). Addressed: "Messrs. Saml & Robt Purviance, Merchts. In Baltimore."

<sup>1</sup> The Secret Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Board of Treasury.

<sup>3</sup> On April 23 Congress approved a recommendation by the Board of Treasury that "there should be paid to the honble. Francis Lewis, Esqr. for sundry goods purchased for cloathing the army out of the prize schooner *Hannah*, and put into the hands of Samuel and Robert Purviance, at Baltimore, the sum of £2,755.0.2 equal to 7,346 62/90 dollars." *JCC*, 7:295.

## Mann Page to John Page

Dear Brother

Philadelphia April 15th 1777

I have for some time past been less punctual in writing to you than I intended, oweing first to the Small Pox, & then to my being detained three Weeks on my Way from Baltimore to this Place by my Wife's Sickness. I am sorry to hear the recruiting Business goes on slowly in

Virginia. It is the Case throughout the Continent. We have no Army hardly, on which Account we are loseing the most favourable Opportunity that could have offered, of destroying the Force which the Enemy now have in America. I wrote to you by Mr. Clarkson & then gave it as my Opinion, that the Enemy would not attack this City, but since that, several Pieces of Information have induced me to give up that Opinion. Indeed there is at this time a considerable Fleet in Delaware Bay, which has set every Body to work to prevent their coming up. If the Citizens would exert themselves, all would be safe; but Toryism, Fear & Avarice have totally obliterated every virtuous Principle. The General thinks that when they do attack Philaa. their land Army will cooperate with their Fleet, but that their present Design is only To cut off the Trade of this River. On Saturday last we lost a valuable Ship loaded with military stores & Cloathing from France. The Captn. fought nobly, & at last ran the Ship aground, & after putting the greater Part of the Crew, & his Papers on Shore, blew her up, but unfortunately he & six of his Crew perished by the Explosion, which happened by the Match burning too fast. A small Affair happened on Sunday Morning in the Jersey. The Enemy attempted with a considerable Party from Brunswick to surprize Genl. Lincoln at Bound Brook, which they had nearly effected oweing to the Negligence of a Militia Guard. We lost 2 field Pieces, & about twenty five Men, most of them Prisoners. The Genl. & his Men behaved well. The Enemy soon left the Town; they lost several Men.

We have Accounts from London by the way of France, dated early in Feby, that Burgoyne with ten thousand British & German Troops is to attack Virginia early in the Spring. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Yours affectionately,

Mann Page Junr.

Tr (DLC). Copied for Edmund C. Burnett "from the original then in the possession of Mr. Stan V. Henkels of Philadelphia."

<sup>1</sup> Ellipsis in Tr.

## Secret Committee to Caesar Rodney

Sir

Philada. April 15th. 1777

You will doubtless have heard of the heavy loss the Public as well as individuals are likely to meet with by the Ship Success, Capt Anderson, being drove onshoar & blown up, near Cape Henlopen but as we are informed a considerable quantity of Goods are on the Beach & like to be saved, We have hopes of lightening the loss & with this View we send down the bearer Mr. Purdie,<sup>1</sup> who will deliver you this letter and then proceed on his way for Lewis Town. We Request the favour of you

to hire immediately a dozen to Twenty Waggons (if you have lately heard from the Beach & by your Accounts can judge what number may be necessary proportion them accordingly) and send them down as quick as possible attended by a Carefull Sober officer of Your Militia & such a Number of Men as you shall deem a good & sufficient guard to bring them & their Loading safe back. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ will prepare every thing against they get down and we hope very little time will be lost. We have given him One Thousand Dollars to defray Charges but as it is impossible to judge how much may be wanted, if this Sum is not sufficient we beg you will supply him with more & we will pay his drafts or repay you as you please.

It is our design that the Goods saved shall come no further than Dover untill we know the quantity & quality saved or find some other cause to give fresh orders, therefore We request you to provide a proper, dry & safe place to deposite them in, at Dover when they come up there. Well knowing your Zeal to serve your Country We suppose any apology for giving you this trouble is unnecessary but as it is possible you may not be in the way when Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ arrives we think it necessary in that case to request this service from the Councill of Safety if such Public Body does now exist, or from some other public Body or Officer or Officers of Militia at Dover assuring them that the Service shall meet with every acknowledgment they can wish and that all Charges & expences will be duely paid. The Waggons you'l agree for on the best terms you can & the officer & men Composing the Guard will be on Continental Pay.

We are Dear Sir, your obedt hble servts, For & by order of the Secret Committee of Congress, Robt Morris Chair Man

RC (PHi). Written and signed by Robert Morris. Addressed: "To Brigadier General Caesar Rodney Esqr, Dover."

<sup>1</sup> Blank in MS here and below. This day Morris reported to the Secret Committee that he had sent Robert Purdy on this mission and had written letters to Rodney and Henry Tucker requesting their assistance. Journal of the Secret Committee, fol. 126, MH-H. Morris' letter to Tucker has not been found. See also Secret Committee to Caesar Rodney, April 25 and May 2, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia Ap. 16. 1777

We are waiting with some Impatience to hear of the Arrival of some of the Massachusetts Troops at Head Q[uar]ters.

The Lassitude and Torpor, that has seized our New Englandmen, is to me, very surprizing.

Something will happen I believe, to arrouse them from their Lethargy.

If they dont go and crush that little Nest of Hornets at Newport, I shall think them dead to all Sense of Honour, Virtue, Shame, and Love to their Country.

The continental Troops must all march to Fishkill and Ti. . . .<sup>1</sup> These are the Places to stop the Progress of the Enemy into New England, which I believe is their Intention, notwithstanding all that they give out about coming to Philadelphia. If they come here, they shall get little but bare Walls. And here they will be starved and drubbed.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:211.

<sup>1</sup> Suspension points in MS.

## John Adams to James Bowdoin

Sir

Philadelphia April 16. 1777

It is difficult to ascertain with Precision the Designs of the Enemy: But by the best Intelligence We can obtain, their Malice and Revenge against New England, is implacable.

Their Intentions, most probably, are to come over the Lakes and enter N. England by that Way, to attack it by the Way of Rhode Island, and also by the Way of the North or the East River. An Armament may possibly be destined to Cheasapeak Bay by Way of Diversion.

The Surest Way to defend New England is to send along all your continental Troops to their Destinations at Fishkill and Ti.

Congress have this day passed a Resolution in the offensive Stile.<sup>1</sup> The Character of New England, is concerned in the Execution of it. I hope in God, that little Banditti of the Halt and blind in Rhode Island will be destroyed in all Events. If it cost us Thousands of Lives it ought to be done. But I believe by an Expedition prudently conducted, they may be driven off or made Prisoners without any considerable Loss. I am sir with great Respect, your most obt. Sert,

John Adams

RC (M-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> Congress passed three resolutions this day urging an attack on British forces in Rhode Island. See John Hancock to Certain States, this date.

James Lovell and Samuel Adams drafted a similar letter to Bowdoin on behalf of the Massachusetts delegates. The following undated FC is in the Samuel Adams Papers, NN, but there is no evidence that the letter was sent to Bowdoin.

"The Intelligence which Congress has very lately receivd of the Enemies repeated Depredations in the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, gave occasion to the passing of the following Resolution: But such has been the Attention of the Massachusetts Bay to the Safety of all these united States, as renders it needless for us (*although requested by Congress*) to enlarge upon the Necessity of their turning an immediate Attention to the Relieve of one in their own Neighborhood, which bears a large Share in the Calamities of War.



"We request that you would lay the Resolution before the General Assembly, as an Apology for this Letter; for, supposing them to have before this Time been made fully acquainted with the Circumstances of Rhode Island, we will not doubt but they are taking such vigorous measures in consequence as to superceed all Necessity for the Resolve which furnishes this particular Occasion of our professing ourselves with much Respect Sir, Your very humble Servts."

## John Adams to James Warren

April 16. 1777

An unfortunate Vessel has arrived from France. The brave Fellow who commanded her, is blown to Pieces in her. A French Nobleman who came in her, got on Shore and brought the Letters.

We have Letters from our Commissioners of the Sixth of Feby.—much in the Same Strain with the former of Jany. 17, tho not quite so encouraging. They say there is an universal Apprehension that We shall Submit. They had not heard of the turn of affairs at Trenton. A Letter from London says, so many Bankruptcies were never known. Two W I Houses have failed for one Million two hundred Thousand Pounds. "Stand firm," say our Friends in England, "and nothing can hurt you." The British Ministry are very angry with France for the assistance she gives Us and threaten to declare War. A Quarrell between the Ministry and the Court of Spain about the Muskito Shore. A fresh Quarell bet[ween] Turks and Russians.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Philadelphia Apl. 16th. 1777

Inclosed is the Copy of an Extract from a Letter sent to our Commissioners in France the beginning of February, by a Gentleman in London, and by them transmitted to the Secret Committee.<sup>1</sup> As it touches our and the other New England States I thought it my Duty to obtain the Favour of a Copy of it, and to transmit it to you by the first Opportunity. It seems by a Letter from the Commissioners that it is a Part of the Plan of the Enemy for the ensuing Campaign to send out 10,000 Germans under Burgoyne to attack Virginia; but they doubt whether that Number can be procured.<sup>2</sup> In my humble Opinion they will not be able to collect a Force adequate to such various Operations. However if our Battalions should be completed before any Reinforcements arrive I think We need not fear what the Enemy can do unto Us. The recruiting Business is of the utmost Importance and I hope will be diligently attended to. Con-

gress hath passed some Resolves on that Head which the President will transmit to our as well as the other States.

It gives me great Pain when I reflect on the laying aside of the Expedition formed against the Enemy on Rhode-Island. Why, Sir, was that Design not executed? Was there not a sufficient Number of Troops collected for the Purpose? Or——? I know not what to attribute it to. I have shown the Assembly's Handbill to many Members. They highly approve the Spirit of the Assembly, and lamented that the Expedition had dropped. It is possible that a Recommendation may go from Congress to the State of Rhode-Island to undertake and with the Assistance of the neighbouring States execute the Destruction, Captivity or Expulsion of the Enemy in our State. I have repeatedly and perhaps oftner than became me mentioned the Necessity of giving them a home blow before they should be reinforced and while We had a Chance. It seems probable to me, if the Enemy intend to direct their Operations wholly & from all Sides against New-England that through our States, by our Bay, an Inroad will be attempted into it. This Consideration affords an additional strong Reason to what hath been suggested for a Descent on Rhode-Island, and increases my Wishes that such an Attempt may be made. The Idea of Carnage and Bloodshed is indeed shocking to Humanity, but the Road to Glory and Liberty hath been always sprinkled with human Blood. Genl. Howe is expected here soon. I hope We shall [*be*] prepared to give him a warm Reception. I was surprised to find by a Letter recd from G. Washington that B[rigadier] G[eneral] Varnum had wrote him that no more than 364 Contl. Soldiers had inlisted the first of April, after having been told by some Gentn. from our State that more than double that Number were raised before that Time.<sup>3</sup> I don't mean to scruple the Truth of Mr. Varnum's Account; but to express by Grief and Astonishment at the dull Progress of the recruiting Service. If the Business goes on as slowly in the other States in N. England as in ours it will be late before We shall have a respectable Army in the Field; so late that We shall be exposed to Ravage & Devastation. Every Nerve ought to be strained and I hope will be strained to complete our Battalions. Please to inform your Delegates what Number of Men have inlisted in the Continental Battalions, and what in the 15th Months Service. what is the Number & State of the Enemy on Rhode-Island, and with the Doings of the Assembly at their late Sessions. Mr. Marchant is not yet arrived. I hope the Genl. Assembly will comply with my Request, and either reappoint me or chuse a new Delegate early in May Session for the Reasons assigned in former Letters; and that if the Honor of a Re-appointment should be conferred upon Me I may have Leave to visit my Family.

I have desired John Collins Esqr. who will hand you this Letter, to collect & journalize every Species of Intelligence he can. Please to be referred to him for News; and to accept of the warmest Wishes for your Happiness from, Your most obedient, humble Servant,

Wm Ellery

P.S. I received a Letter very lately in which he informed me that Flour had fallen.

RC (RHi).

<sup>1</sup> See the Commissioners' February 6 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:262.

<sup>2</sup> See James Lovell to James Bowdoin, this date, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> See Washington's April 12 letter to President Hancock in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:397.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Phil. April 16th. 1777

I closed a Letter to you this Morning, expecting that Capt Collins would set out to day; but as he tells me that he shall not set out until to Morrow, I have again taken up my Pen to inform you, that Congress have this Day, Resolved to recommend it to the State of Rhode-Island &c to collect the whole Force of the State, and aided, by the Militia of the Massachusetts and Connecticut States, to attack and destroy the Enemy on Rhode-Island. They have also recommended it to those States to lend their Assistance in this Expedition, and have directed Genl Washington to appoint proper Officers to see it executed. I hope that this Attempt will not fall through as the other did; but proceed and be crowned with Success.<sup>1</sup>

You will have the Resolves by Express, but as there is a possibility he may not arrive so soon as Capt Collins I hope it will not be thought amiss to have given you this Notice. I am with great Respect, Yr Honor's very hble Servt.

W Ellery

RC (RHi).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:272-73; and John Hancock to Washington, this date.

## John Hancock to Certain States

Gentlemen,

Philada. April 16th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress I am commanded to transmit to you, & most earnestly to call upon you to exert yourselves to carry the same into Execution.<sup>1</sup> In the present Situation of the British Army, it is much to be wished, that an Attack could be made upon the Enemy in your State,<sup>2</sup> which, whatever Success may attend it, would at least cause a Diversion of their Forces in New Jersey, if it could be speedily undertaken. I have wrote to the States of Massachusetts Bay & Connecticut to afford you all the assistance in their Power in executing this important

Service. I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very  
hble Servt. J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed to the Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island Assemblies.

<sup>1</sup> These were resolves of this date calling for an expedition to drive the British out of Rhode Island. *JCC*, 7:272-73. This expedition did not get under way until October 1777, and then it turned out to be a failure, prompting a congressional investigation into its lack of success. *JCC*, 9:975-76, 988, 1018, 1027, 10:93, 290, 321-22; and Benjamin Cowell, *Spirit of '76 in Rhode Island* . . . (Boston: A. J. Wright, 1850), pp. 144-46.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Rhode Island.

## John Hancock to the States

Gentlemen, (Circular) Philada. April 16th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves of Congress I am commanded to transmit to you, & most earnestly to entreat your immediate Compliance therewith.<sup>1</sup> They are so very explicit and at the same Time so very important, that I need not enlarge. Give me Leave just to observe that upon their faithful Execution at this critical Period, the Interest & Happiness of our Country absolutely depend.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be Gentlemen &c,  
J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Thirteen States."

<sup>1</sup> See Congress' April 14 resolves on the recruiting service in *JCC*, 7:261-63.

<sup>2</sup> The RC of Hancock's letter to the New York Convention contains this postscript: "I shall be much oblig'd to you to forward the Inclos'd Packett by a fresh Express to General Gates, & Send my Express back." New York Provincial Congress Revolutionary Papers, N. This "Packett" may have contained Congress' resolution of April 16 directing Gates to counteract a reported plot by "divers ill affected persons . . . to destroy the ferry-boats on that part of Hudson's river above Saratoga, at the time that the enemy's army may arrive from Canada, in order to obstruct the movements of the American troops and to distress them." *JCC*, 7:273.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir, Philada. April 16th. 1777.

The enclosed Resolves will convey to you such Information of the Proceedings of Congress as may be necessary for your Direction and future Conduct touching the same.<sup>1</sup>

In the present Situation of the British Army, it is extremely to be wished that an Attack could be made upon their Troops in Rhode Island, which, tho' it should not prove successful, would, in all Probability, cause a Diversion of their Forces in New Jersey or elsewhere. The Con-



gress therefore have strongly recommended to the State of Rhode Island to make the Attack, and to the States of Massachusetts Bay and Connecticut to afford them all the Assistance in their Power in executing this important Service.<sup>2</sup> I have wrote to these States on the Subject.

The printed Resolves herewith transmitted,<sup>3</sup> being of the utmost Consequence, I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them. Should they fail of procuring the several Quotas to be raised by the respective States, it is the Intention of Congress that after the First of May, Draughts should be made from the Militia.

Your Favour of the 12th Inst<sup>4</sup> I was duely honoured with, and immediately communicated the same to Congress. I have the Honour to be with the greatest Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble servt.

John Hancock Prest.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to those mentioned in the remainder of the letter, Hancock also sent Washington numerous resolves on military affairs passed between April 10 and 15. *JCC*, 7:252–58, 266, 269–70.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 2:272–73. For Washington's lukewarm reaction to this proposed expedition, see Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:436.

<sup>3</sup> These were broadsides containing Congress' April 14 resolves on military recruiting. *JCC*, 7:261–63; and Washington Papers, DLC.

<sup>4</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 152, 4:75–78, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:396–98.

## Richard Henry Lee to George Washington

[April 16? 1777]<sup>1</sup>

Your letter to the Committee was immediately laid before Congress, and in consequence thereof, Gen. Schuyler was ordered to carry your ideas into execution with all possible dispatch. The Troops are therefore ordered to Bristol without delay, and thither will go all such as come from the Southward. You have only to order them from Bristol to Head Quarters at your pleasure. The inclosures now sent are from France by the last Ship. The Memoir is written by one of the first Generals in France, or in Europe, purely from views of serving the American cause, which the Mareshal appears to love. The accounts from Nantes are taken from a letter of Doctr. Lee to the Secret Committee in his way from Paris to the Court of Madrid. I thought it might avail you to have the general idea therein given of the enemies views and designs the ensuing Campaign. In the letter signed by all the Commissioners, we learn that the capital operations will certainly be against New England, the exterpatation of which is proposed, whilst military government & slavery is (as they think the milder punishment) intended for the middle and southern States.<sup>2</sup> Conversing lately with Mr. James Hunter of Fredericksburg, whose labors have benefitted the public greatly, I find

that the indispensable article of iron has been greatly affected, and its production injured, by the constant practise of inlisting the Laborers in those works, and pressing the Teams belonging to them. There are few things more capable of throwing distress among the people, and injuring the public affairs, than such a procedure. I would therefore submit it to your consideration Sir, whether (until the Legislatures can provide compitent laws) it will not greatly remedy the evil, if you were, by order published in all the papers, [to] forbid all Continental Officers from inlisting persons engaged with, and actually serving in any iron works within the United States, or from pressing any horses, teams, or Carriages of any kind belonging to such works. I believe that this would in great degree remedy the evil, if not totally remove it.<sup>3</sup>

I am, with great affection and esteem, dear Sir your most obedient and very humble servant,  
Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> This letter was written in response to Washington's April 12 letter to "the committee of Congress appointed to write to him," which was read and acted on in Congress this day. See *JCC*, 7:270-71; and Committee of Congress to Washington, April 10, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> "The inclosures" included the commissioners' February 6 letter and Arthur Lee's February 11 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, which are in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:261-65, 266-69. Marshall Maillebois' "Memoir," which the commissioners labelled "sentiments of some particulars useful in carrying on our war," had been enclosed in their letter to the committee.

<sup>3</sup> For Washington's rejection of this suggestion, see his April 24 letter to Lee in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:462-65.

## Francis Lewis to William Allison and Robert R. Livingston

Phil 16th April 1777.

I have been favored with your letter of the 2d Inst. covering two Resolves of the Honble Convention dated the 1st and to which due regard shall be paid.<sup>1</sup>

From the information I have hitherto obtained of the quantity of salt in this City it is so inconciderable, that I apprehend none will be permitted to be sent out at present, I shall do my utmost to procure it.

I did not arrive here from Baltimore untill the 13th Inst. & yesterday Mr. Livingston shewed me a Resolve of the Honble Convention dated 29th Mar requesting me to repair to that board, but as I left my Baggage at Baltimore & having also other business to transact there relative to the Montgomery Prizes, I shall be obliged to go to Baltimore previous to my attending the Convention.<sup>2</sup>

The Brign. with Salt (one of Capt. Rogers's Prizes) was at Baltimore acquitted by a Jury. I have appealed from their Verdict to Congress, but have not yet been furnished with proper papers from Baltimore to proceed.<sup>3</sup> I am, Gentlm., your Humbl Servt, Fras. Lewis

RC (McHi).

<sup>1</sup> These resolves are described in Lewis to the New York Convention, March 12, 1777, note 4. Allison and Livingston were members of the convention.

<sup>2</sup> On March 29 the New York Convention ordered Lewis, William Floyd, and Lewis Morris to return to New York for consultations, directed James Duane and Philip Livingston to return to Congress, elected William Duer a delegate, and decided that two delegates could form a quorum in Congress. *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:855.

<sup>3</sup> On April 24 Congress referred to the "standing committee on appeals" the issue of the claim to the brigantine *Minerva* made by Capt. William Rogers, commander of the privateering sloop *Montgomery*, but thereafter the journals do not mention the matter. *JCC*, 7:297. However on June 7 Lewis reported that the committee had upheld the decision of the Maryland Admiralty Court rejecting Rogers' claim. See Lewis to the New York Convention, January 16, 31, March 12, and June 7, 1777.

## James Lovell to James Bowdoin

Sir

Philada. 16th Apr. 1777

You will not have denominated my past acquaintance with you an Intimacy, and therefore will not charge me with faulty neglect in not having addressed a letter to you, as a private Gentleman, since I left Boston. Permit me, however, to confide in that acquaintance, so much, as to hope you will judge my omission of writing to you, in your public Character, has not amounted to a breach of *evident* duty, tho' self diffidence has prevailed over me on slighter occasions. I wish my conduct at this time may confirm you in such a friendly judgment.

Having been appointed to conferences with two of our Generals, Gates & Greene, some weeks ago, I had gained strong ideas that the Enemy was not in a capacity to move against this city, and that such a motion would be *useless* as well as dangerous, unless performed prior to the removal of provisions & stores from hence. The preparations making by the British army, now, have indeed the face of such an expedition, but have not abolished my ideas before mentioned. I suspect many appearances to be meer feints; and I am not so vainly fond of establishing a character of the truest political foresight as to be affraid to throw out an opinion which a short time may contradict. I do not believe Howe is coming to Philadelphia. Information from France of February the 11th confirms my former distrust of threats & Preparitives against this Capital. The plan of operation is said to be for Howe, when recruited, to act against New England; for Carleton to cross the lakes & keep the middle

Colons. in awe; for Burgoyne, who is to come from England with 10,000 men, *if he can get them*, to make an invasion upon Virginia & Maryland. Reports have gone from London to Paris that 10,000 Germans are actually engaged, but the French and Spanish Ministers give assurances that it is with the greatest difficulty that the British army can keep up their former number by recruits. It seems to our Agents certain they will make 3 attacks, and use their utmost efforts this campaign, as they cannot long be without employment nearer home. England, Ireland & Hanover are left defenceless by the efforts to turn all possible force against us. The French Minister told our friends that the King of England had tried *in vain* to get troops to supply in Hanover the place of those sent from thence to Gibraltar.

By letters of the 14th of Feby. from Doctr. Lee on his road to Madrid we are informed that commissions of marque are granting in England. The Press is most violent but without Proportionable produce. This together with the preparations of France & Spain makes peace, he says, impossible many months. He was of opinion, at the date of this last writing, that the Armaments against us would be late if Europe permits them at all. But he adds, it is best to prepare as if we had no dependance but upon ourselves, for the Politics of Europe are very *wavering*.<sup>1</sup>

It is just so, Sir, with the plans of the British General in America; therefore I cannot but earnestly wish there may [*be*] such an apprehension of a chance of his once more making an effort against our state, as to cause some tollerable preparation to withstand him till those troops in the middle Colonies which are amused by feints, should be able to give their assistance in New England.

The paper which I inclose tends to prove the necessity of having suitable magazines of Flour &c.<sup>2</sup> I fear the Enemy have taken much of what was expected by you from Maryland and Virginia.

Having, agreeable to my duty, hinted my apprehensions about a sudden turn of the British troops towards New England, I shall fill the remaining paper with miscellaneous intelligence.

The British Government hath been so very maliciously abandoned as to make an offer to the East India Company to deliver the American prisoners to *them* if they would call for them at Gibraltar. This Proposal is on record in the Company's books, and a General Court was actually held upon it.

Great Britain countenanced a settlement on the Mosquito Shoar. The Spaniards routed the Setlers, and acquainted the British Ministry with the whole proceedings. Lord Weymouth is very desirous of avowing the countenance which was at first given, but others in power are for meanly lying about it; whence misunderstanding has arisen in the ministry. And the Spaniard, finding it was not instantly disavowed as a public measure, has said he shall make a serious business of it, if the British Ministry are so disposed.



The Amphitrite is on her way with 52 four pounders and other useful articles, and two other vessels with a proportion of the same magazine, from whence the mentioned Peices had been shipped; which consisted at first of 200 of that Bore & 22 Mortiers with all their Atraille, and Powder Balls & Bombs.

Though a variety of reports may reach you about the insults offered by different Indians, yet, from the papers which have fallen within my sight in a necessary course, I can venture to assure that a war with them is not inevitable. They are outcast Banditti and not regular formidable Tribes which have done mischiefs. The latter profess friendship, and give very shrewd replies to British Solicitors.

I ought to mention that our proceedings by Sea are counted the most detrimental to the British Ministry's Reputation. Our friends in France will be greatly chagrined at the present Embargo. I wish it was avoidable.

I have the honor to be with great Esteem, Sir, Your obliged very humb. Servt.

James Lovell

[P.S.] I wish my Respects & Love presented to your Lady, Miss Bowdoin, your Grandaughter and Mr. Bowdoin.

RC (M-Ar).

<sup>1</sup> For Arthur Lee's February 14 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, see Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:270-71.

<sup>2</sup> Lovell's enclosed extract is dated "London 2d. Febry.," but it is from the Edward Bancroft letter to Silas Deane that is printed under the date January 31, 1777, in *NYHS Collections* 19 (1886): 479-81.

The extract copied by Lovell omitted Bancroft's statement on the dismal prospects for support within British political circles. "The state of politics here is in every way disagreeable: four-fifths at least of the English people despise us, and look upon us as cowards, and assert that we shall be beaten before the middle of summer. The friends of America, on the other hand, are discouraged; those of the minority who have espoused the cause of the people, find that this cause is on the side of their adversaries. Rockingham's party has had a meeting, and wanted to make a formal secession, and publish a declaration of their reasons for acting thus; but other branches of the minority opposed this as a useless thing, and adverse to the people in the present state of affairs, so that I think nothing will be done."

## Philip Schuyler to Richard Varick

Dear Sir <sup>1</sup>

Phila. April 16th 1777

I am much obliged by your several Letters, thank you for them for your good wishes and attention.

Some people here are greatly disappointed. They were In hopes that I would have resigned Immediately upon my receiving Certain very unaccountable resolutions of the 15th ult.<sup>2</sup> Finding that I would not do that they wish to avoid an Enquiry and throw out that there are no Complaints against me, and that they have never believed in any of the malicious re-

ports propagated to my disadvantage. They have however gone too far, and all that stands on their Journals Injurious to me must be Expunged or I quit the Service. Mr. Livingston & Mr Duane are this day arrived and my business will be opened to morrow.<sup>3</sup> Mr Lansing Jr will write you what passes here and how our time is spent, I am too much hurried to do It.

Adieu my dear Colonel & Believe me Ever, sincerely Yours &c,  
Ph. Schuyler

RC (MiDbEI).

<sup>1</sup> Richard Varick (1753–1831) of New York was General Schuyler's military secretary and deputy muster-master general in the northern department. In 1780 Varick became an aide to Benedict Arnold when that officer was commander of West Point, but he was later acquitted by a military court of inquiry of any complicity in Arnold's treason. Varick next became confidential secretary to Washington, and in this capacity he spent the rest of the war transcribing 44 volumes of the commander-in-chief's headquarters papers and personal correspondence. *DAB*.

<sup>2</sup> See John Hancock to Schuyler, March 18, 1777, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> On April 18 Congress appointed a committee consisting of one delegate from each state "to enquire into the conduct of Major General Schuyler, since he has held a command in the army of the United States." *JCC*, 7:279–80. A full discussion of this inquiry will appear in volume seven.

## Philip Schuyler to George Washington

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 16h. 1777.

On the Intelligence received by Congress that nine of the Enemies Ships of War had got into Delaware Bay, and that a Number of Transports were seen in the offing, the Continental Troops in this City amounting to 563 Rank and File were ordered to Fort Island to assist in compleating the Fortifications there, which are in a very defenceless State, and to throw up a Work on Red Bank to prevent the Enemies taking possession and thereby forcing the vessels and Floating Batteries designed for the protection of the Chevaux de Frise from their Station. Your Excellency's Letter of the                      Instant was received this Morning and refered to me with an order to carry your Intentions into Execution. In obedience thereto I have ordered the Troops immediately to move to Bristol, where they will be joined by 250 Virginians just arrived.<sup>1</sup>

All the Military Stores belonging to the Public are ordered out of Town and the Quantity now left in it is very inconsiderable.<sup>2</sup>

I advised Congress that I had been informed that very considerable Quantities of provisions and other Stores that might be greatly serviceable to the Enemy were collected by private persons, in Consequence of which persons are appointed by the Board of War of this State to take an exact account of them. Considerable progress has been made in the Business, and the Result has shewn that the Information was just,

and Matters are put in such a Train as that we shall to Morrow Morning begin to move those Stores.<sup>3</sup>

Directions are given for building the Boats your Excellency mentions.

Be assured Sir that whilst I remain here no Exertions of mine shall be wanting to promote the public Service.

I am Dear Sir with the greatest respect, Your Excellency's Most Obedt  
Hum Servt,  
Ph. Schuyler

RC (DLC). In the hand of John Lansing, Jr., and signed by Schuyler. Lansing was Schuyler's secretary.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:246-47, 250-51. Washington's April 12 letter to the committee of Congress that had written to him on the 10th is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:400-402. Fitzpatrick erroneously described the recipient of this letter as the Executive Committee.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:255.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:254.

## Samuel Adams to James Warren

My dear Sir

Philade. April 17. 1777

I should before this time have acknowledged your Favors of the 2d & 24th of Feb. had I not constantly been in the Situation which you represent to be yours, in your last of the 2d of April.<sup>1</sup> "Something or other has always taken Place to call me off." We have for some time past been threatned with an Invasion by Sea, and the last Accounts receivd from the Capes say, there are nine of the Enemies Ships of War within the River. I inclose this days paper which gives an Account of the Misfortune of the Ship Morris & other Intelligence.<sup>2</sup> By the last Letters from France dated in February we are informd that a War is inevitable, and that our Affairs there still wear a favorable Aspect. My worthy Friend Dr L. [Arthur Lee] who, you have heard, is got to Paris, writes to me in these Words, "The Politicks in Europe depend on too many Whims and Refinements for us to hazard the downright Defence of every thing dear to us upon them. It is well to cultivate Europe but not to depend upon it." He speaks my Sentiments, and, I believe, yours. I have been always of opinion, that we must depend upon our own Efforts, under God for the Establishment of our Liberties. When it suits the Interest of foreign Powers they will aid us substantially. That some of them will find it their Interest to aid us I can hardly doubt but there seems not to be Virtue enough left in the World, from generous and disinterested Motives to interpose in Support of the Common Rights of Mankind. We are told that fresh Disputes have arisen between Russia and the Turks, and a Quarrel is likely to ensue. France and Spain are preparing mighty Fleets, to consist of 30 Sail of the Line each & to be ready for the Sea the first of March.

The Merchants of Britain in a Memorial laid before Ld Sandwich reckon their Losses by the Captures our Privateers have made on their W. India Trade to be £1,800,000. Insurance had arisen to 28 per Cent & Bankruptcys had taken place. There is no kind of Relaxation here, says a London Correspondent, in Warlike Preparations, and yet the Ministry have so contrivd it, that but few People beleive there is any Danger of War. I am much puzzled, says he, about the real Intention in Respect of these great & hasty Armaments; they are certainly too expensive to be mere Scarecrow, and improbable as on one Account it seems, there is Reason to beleive they intend, when their present Loan is compleated, either to attack France, or at least to hold very high Language to her. Certain it is, that Ld Weymouth has of late seriously & warmly urg'd an immediate Declaration of War with France, and tho' such Declaration has not been made, it is perhaps only *suspended*. With Regard to America we are informd, that Transports were getting ready to bring out the additional British & Hessian Troops & it was intended they should all sail by the beginning of March. The Campaign is to be open'd *unusually early* and the operations directed *wholly and from all sides against New England*, that by early and vigorous Exertions they may crush the Northern Colonies. I think I have given this to you and my other Friends as my opinion in my Letters the last Winter. If they can subdue those stubborn States they flatter themselves the rest will submit. It is necessary that New England should sustain her Character and Firmness. Their Intention is to extirpate the People there and make Slaves of the Rest of America. I wish the Nest of Hornets on Rhode Island had been before now destroyed. I expected it would have been done. I have been informd of the Reason why it was not done. The Congress have now recommended it to the States of M. B., C., & N.H. to call forth their Militia for that Purpose and have directed Genl Washington to send a suitable officer to take the Command. I hope it will now be done. It is certainly wise to conquer our Enemies in Detail before their Reinforcements can arrive. I fear N E will be charg'd with the Loss of her former military Pride if it is not done. I have been sanguine in urging it here, and have almost pawnd my Reputation on the Success of the Undertaking as well as the Valor of my Countrymen. I wish for more of an enterprizing Spirit, and shall feel my self happy in the Revival of such a Spirit in New England.

Capt Collins who will deliver this Letter is now ready to set off and waits. Adieu my Friend. I will speak to Genl Mifflin again who is now here about Mr Temples Affair.<sup>3</sup> I am glad to hear of the brisk Sale of Lottery Ticketts in Boston & that the Loan office is successfull.<sup>4</sup> I hope Boston will be made as strong as Gibralter. Our 15 Battalions may be completed. I am pleas'd with the Measures you are taking with the Tories. Dont let the Execution of the good Law be abated an Iota in a single Instance. If they take the oath, you must nevertheless keep a



watchful Eye over them. They are a cursed Generation. We are plagued with them here beyond bearing.

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed. FC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> Warren's February 2, 24, and April 2 letters to Adams are in *Warren-Adams Letters*, 2:444-48.

<sup>2</sup> For the "Misfortune of the Ship Morris," see John Adams' second letter to Abigail Adams, April 13, 1777, note.

<sup>3</sup> At this point in the FC Adams added: "Please to present my Respects to Mr. Bowdoin & inform him of this. I will take the first opportunity to acknowledge his last Letter."

<sup>4</sup> At this point in the FC Adams added: "but am sorry that you are so much a Stranger to the Loan office as I used to be to the Friends of Government. You must be Stranger indeed, I hope not for the same Reason."

## William Duer to the New York Convention

Sir,

Philadelphia, April 17th, 1777.

I should have done myself the honor of writing to you immediately after my arrival, but have been so occupied by various business the whole Time I have been here that I have not had time to write on the different Matters relative to the State of New York and now before Congress.

I am extremely concerned to inform you that there is no prospect at present of our obtaining a supply of Salt from the Continental magazines, there being only 1200 Bushels in store at this place.

I have requested Mr. Robert Morris to inform me whenever any salt is to be exposed to sale, and should the other Gentleman who represent our State concur in opinion, I will employ a person to purchase, in Behalf of the State, on the most reasonable Terms possible.

The Letter from the Convention relative to the Insurgents in the North Eastern parts of the State transmitted to Mr. Lewis Morris before my arrival, has been read in Congress; but as I expected daily the arrival of Mr. Duane and Mr. Livingston, I thought it most prudent to get the consideration postponed, to which Congress acceded.

The deputies from New Connecticut are now in town, and have presented to Congress a memorial, a copy of which I shall do myself the honor to transmit you in a day or two. I can by no means think that this attempt to dismember our State will be countenanced by Congress, tho', I am sorry to say, that I can very easily perceive that Individuals from the Eastern States mean to support Messrs. Allens in their extravagant Pretensions. I flatter myself however, that with the Assistance of my colleagues, I shall procure such Resolutions passed as will reprobate their Proceedings and oblige the revolted Subjects to render a due Obedience to the laws of the State.<sup>1</sup>

I am extremely sorry to inform you, that notwithstanding the Invasion which threatens this city, a Langour prevails amongst the Inhabitants of

almost all Ranks. The Disputes about their constitution and a want of vigilance & vigour in detecting and defeating the Designs of the disaffected have given the Malignants a dangerous ascendancy. The depreciation of the Continental Money is astonishingly rapid, and I see with Concern that no attempts are made to check so fatal a measure. You will observe by the inclosed resolutions of Congress of the 14th & 15th April that they have been under the necessity of supplying an executive authority in this State.<sup>2</sup> By the recess of the Supreme Executive Council there was an absolute interregnum, and if Congress had not interposed, this State would have fallen an easy prey to a very small body of the enemy's army. It is to be hoped however, that the authority now established will exert itself with vigour, and that a little Quackery will save a powerful State, which must have fallen a sacrifice to a speculative system of politicks.

At the Request of Major General Schuyler, I transmit you Extracts of two letters, which he has lately received from which you will learn with Sorrow, that our Strength at Tyconderoga is totally inadequate to resist any attempt of the Enemys army; at least it appears so to me, notwithstanding the sanguine Expectations which Colonel Wayne entertains that he should be able to maintain the Garrison, till Succours could arrive.

By a Return sent to the General on the 1st of April, it appears that there are only 685 men fit for Duty at that post, including 120 artificers, & exclusive of 73 Matrosses fit for duty. The General does not think that any Reinforcement has yet arrived there. I thought it my duty to transmit this Intelligence, as the fate of our State is so intimately connected with the preservation of that fortress.

The slow progress made in the recruiting business, notwithstanding the favorable accounts which were at first circulated, has at length roused Congress, and they have entered into sundry resolutions for compleating the battalions, which I have the Honor to transmit.<sup>3</sup> It is with pleasure that I consider that the State to which I have the Honor to belong, has pointed out to Congress the most eligible and effectual mode of completing the army. Would to Heaven that the Spirit and activity which has of late animated the Councils of the State of New York would diffuse itself throughout the other States! A portion of their Electrical fire is certainly wanting. Without it, should the enemy receive a timely Reinforcement, and show the least Spirit of Enterprise, our affairs must inevitably suffer.

I have the pleasure to assure the Convention that the State of New York stands in very high point of light in the Eyes of the Continent, and that General Washington in his public letters to Congress gives the most honorable testimonials in its Favor.<sup>4</sup> These, Sir, are the happy effects of our unanimity and vigour. May their influence continue to pervade our councils. Whatever may be our fate, the leaders in public measures in our State will then have the consolation to think that no misfortunes which in the course of political events may happen, can be justly imputed to them.

I have in my Hands about £1200 belonging to the State, which I beg to know whether I shall remit or keep in Bank, in hopes of making a purchase of salt. Whatever directions I may receive shall be faithfully complied with.

Mr. Duane and Mr. Livingston who arrived here yesterday, desire me to tender their respects to the Convention.

I have the honor to be, with every Sentiment of Esteem & Respect, Sir,  
Your obedt. hble Servant, Wm. Duer.

RC (N). Tr (DLC). RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of this issue, see William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, April 7, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> The train of events leading up to the passage of these controversial resolutions was set in motion on April 9 when Congress read a letter from Gen. Israel Putnam predicting a new British advance on Philadelphia. Congress gave a copy of this letter to the Pennsylvania delegates for transmittal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Executive Council and also appointed a committee of five to consider ways of opposing the anticipated British attack. The committee reported on April 10, and Congress then agreed to set up a military camp west of the Delaware and to ask the executive council to send 3,000 Pennsylvania militiamen to it. *JCC*, 7:246-47, 250-51; and *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:300.

But Congress soon learned that the Pennsylvania state authorities were temporarily unable to cope with the emergency. On April 11 Congress appointed a committee consisting of Samuel Adams, Abraham Clark, and Duer to confer with the Pennsylvania Board of War on how to prevent "provisions" in Philadelphia from falling into the hands of the enemy. The committee reported on the 14th that the state was in no position to take effective measures to defend Pennsylvania because the legislature was in adjournment and many members of the executive council were absent. Consequently, Congress called upon Thomas Wharton, president of the executive council, "to convene the legislative and executive authorities of the State of Pennsylvania" as soon as possible and in the meantime appointed Duer, Samuel Adams, and Richard Henry Lee to confer with Wharton, various state officials, and the Pennsylvania delegates "concerning the mode of authority which they shall conceive most eligible to be exercised, during the recess of the house of assembly and the council, in order that the same, if approved of by Congress, may be immediately adopted." Such a conference was held on the 15th, and as a result Congress resolved on the same day that as "the executive authority of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania is incapable of any exertion adequate to the present crisis . . . the president of the supreme executive council of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, together with as many members of the said council as can be convened, the board of war, and, in such cases as relate to the marine, the navy board of said State, should, in the present critical exigency of affairs, exercise every authority to promote the safety of the State, till such time as the legislative and executive authorities of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania can be convened." *JCC*, 7:254, 263-64, 268-69; and *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:311-12. These resolves were denounced by the radical party in Pennsylvania as an unwarranted intrusion by Congress into state affairs, and Duer, who was regarded as the moving spirit behind them, became a particular object of radical criticism. Duer himself later insisted that he had supported these resolves only because the military situation at the time seemed to require them. See William Duer's Statement, March 9, 1779; and Robert L. Brunhouse, *The Counter-Revolution in Pennsylvania, 1776-1790* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Historical Commission, 1942), pp. 27-30.

The names of the Pennsylvania delegates and state officials who met with the committee of Congress on April 15—information not available in the journals—are listed in *Pa. Archives*, 1st ser. 5:311. Furthermore, Worthington C. Ford, the first editor of the journals, renders one part of the committee's April 15 report to Congress as "at the particular instance and request of the president [and] of the supreme executive council," when, in fact, as Burnett pointed out, the use of the bracketed conjunction is erroneous and misleading. See *JCC*, 7:268; and Burnett, *Letters*, 2:332n.3.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:261–63.

<sup>4</sup> See, for instance, Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:397.

## Francis Lewis to the New York Convention

Sir

Philadelphia 17th April 1777.

Inclosed is Capt. Samuel Tudor's receipt for ten thousand dollars<sup>1</sup> which I procured for the purposes of defraying the charges incident to the frigates at Esopus, and as Mr. Denning the Treasurer in that department is removed to Harford, must beg the Honourable Convention would give the necessary directions for issuing the money when wanting, directing that proper vouchers be taken for the same.

Yesterday Mr. Phil. Livingston showed me Resolves of the Honble Convention, dated 29th ulto. requesting my attendance at their Board, to which I shall pay due regard, but it will be out of my power to proceed for Kingston immediately, for the reasons communicated to your committee of correspondence, and to which beg your refference; besides some matters of moment in Committees of which I am a member that requires my attendance for a few days. These necessary requisitions completed, I shall be as expeditious as possible in my attendance upon the Honble. Board. I have the Honor to be, sir, Your very humble servt.

Fra. Lewis

RC (N). *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:245. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> This receipt is in *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:245.

## Benjamin Rumsey to Thomas Johnson

Dear Sir

Philada. 17th April. 1777

Mr. Morris to Day put into my Hands your Letter to him of the 1st of April<sup>1</sup> in which you express the general Sense that prevailed in the State of Maryland respecting the leaving a Battallion in Somersett County, that it would conduce much to the general Interest, would keep the three Counties inclined to Toryism in Order, and eventually save the Effusion of much Blood as well as a heavy Expence.



APRIL 17, 1777

605

Dear Sir

6th

6th

Mr. Morris to Day put into my Hands your Letter of the 1<sup>st</sup> of April in which you express the general Sense that prevailed in the State of Maryland respecting the leaving a Battalion there in Somerset County, that it would conduce much to the general Interest & would keep the three Counties inclined to Foryism in Order and eventually save the Effusion of much Blood as well as a heavy Expence.

I moved in consequence thereof that Genl. Smallwood should be ordered to station a Battalion there to be under the Direction of the Executive Power of the State of Maryland untill removed or otherwise ordered by Congress.

On Debate the Sense of the House seemed to be that None of the Troops already raised could be spared but that a new Battalion might be raised on continental Pay and Expence for that Purpose and have directed a Committee to bring in a Report on the Subject composed of Col<sup>l</sup> Deer, Col<sup>l</sup> Wilson, Mr. S. Adams and myself when a Report is made and any Step taken in consequence thereof I shall do myself the Honour to write to you on the Subject.

I have the Honour to be

D<sup>r</sup> Sir

Your most h<sup>l</sup> Serv<sup>t</sup>  
Benjamin Rumsey

17<sup>th</sup> April 1777 }  
Philad<sup>a</sup> ——— }

I moved in Consequence thereof that Genl. Smallwood should be ordered to station a Battallion there to be under the Direction of the Executive Power of the State of Maryland untill removed or otherwise ordered by Congress.

On Debate the Sense of the House seemed to be that None of the Troops already raised could be spared but that a new Battallion might be raised on continental Pay and Expence for that Purpose and have directed a Comittee to bring in a Report on the Subject composed of Colo. Duer, Colo. Wilson, Mr. S. Adams and myself. When a Report is made and any Step taken in Consequence thereof, I shall do myself the Honour to write to you on the Subject.<sup>2</sup>

I have the Honour to be, Dr. Sir, your most hum. Servt.

Benjamin Rumsey

RC (MdAA).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> *JCC*, 7:275. For the committee's report and Congress' April 19 resolves on maintaining a Continental battalion on the Maryland eastern shore to overawe the disaffected, see *JCC*, 7:284-86. See also *Md. Archives*, 16:222-23, 225-28, 242.

## Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings

April 17. 1777

Come. met. Present Messrs. Morris, R.H. Lee, Lewis, Livingston. The Come. agreed with Mr. Morris to make a joint concern of the ship *Lions* cargo now Loadg. in this port for France. She has now on board about 260 hhd's of tobo. & is to be filld up with as much more of that Article as She will take & flour. The ship belongs to Mr. Morris & he values her at £4000 curr. the half of wch. sum the Come. agree to ensure on sd. ship until his return to this port, & to allow 4 guin[ea]s per hhd freight for tobo. & ten shillings sterg. per barrel for flour & 2/6 sterg. per foot for any goods &c she may bring back.

MS (MH-H).

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir

Philadelphia April 17th. 1777

Congress is desirous if possible to Subdue the Enemy that are in this Country before a reinforcement can arrive. The Small pox has greatly retarded the recruits Joyning the Army. We had information Some time ago that preparations were making to attack the Enemy on Rhode Island

& dislodge them. Why it has not been executed we have not been informed. A resolution passed Yesterday recommending to the State of Rhode Island to raise its whole force, to the Massachusetts & Connecticut States, to raise their militia in the neighbourhood of Rhode Island, to attack the Enemy, & have directed General Washington to order a Suitable continental General officer to Command there.<sup>1</sup> The President has Sent copies of the resolution to the Several States concerned. Enclosed are resolutions to forward the recruiting Service, & some alterations of the Articles for the government of the Army.<sup>2</sup> The Enclosed News Paper contains a list of Surgeons & Physicians appointed for the Hospitals,<sup>3</sup> among whom is Doctr. Phillip Turner; Doctr. Foster gives him a very good Character in a letter to a member of Congress. Your Honr will have a copy of the regulations of the Hospitals & the Pay of the persons to be Employed in the public Papers. The pay I think is very high, but Physicians in the Southern States are used to high Pay.

Our last Letter from Doctr. Franklin & Mr. Dean was dated the 6th of February. No Treaty had been then concluded; some probability that France & Spain would make war with Great Britain but Nothing certainly determined on. Both French & Spaniards favour our cause. Accounts from England are that the Kings Subjects have lost £1,800,000 by the American Cruisers. That Insurance is at 28 per cent. That the Ministry intend to bend their force again New England to Extirpate them & enslave the Inhabitants of the Southern States. There has been talk that the Enemy designs to come to this city but I dont think they will attempt it before they are reinforced. I wish Some of the other Delegates of Connecticut would attend Congress. The Confederation will be entered on Next Monday & finished as soon as possible. I write in haste as the Honble Mr Collens of Rhode Island by whom I send this waits. I am with great Regard, Your Honrs. obedient humble Servant,

Roger Sherman

RC (PHi). Endorsed: "Recd. per Capt Collins & Capt. Jones, April 25th."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:272-73.

<sup>2</sup> For these resolves of April 14, see *JCC*, 7:261-62, 264-66.

<sup>3</sup> Such a list appeared in the April 15 issue of the *Pennsylvania Evening Post*.

## Oliver Wolcott to George Wyllys

Sir,<sup>1</sup>

Philadelphia 17t April 1777

Your known Love of your Country renders any Apology for my Writing to you upon any Matters wherein its Happiness may be affected altogether unnecessary. I shall therefore Sir, take the Liberty to acquaint you, that our latest Accounts from Europe from those who We Ought most to depend upon are that the Plan of Operations for the Next Cam-

paign is for Howe and his Army with such Recruits as he can get and shall be sent to him to Act against N. England, while Car[li]eton makes his Way through the Lakes, to keep the Middle Colonies in Awe, and Bur-gone with an Armament from England of Ten Thousand if they can be procured, invades the South, probably Virginia and Maryland. That it is given out in England that Ten Thousand Germans are already actually engaged, but that the better and more probable Account is, that it will be Very difficult for G. Britain to procure more of these People than will be necessary to keep up the Numbers formerly stipulated, and that their Armaments will most certainly fall much short of what they intended, and that such as they do send will not only come late if the Affairs of Europe shall permit them to come at all, but that the Troops both from England and Germany will be such as are new raised and consequently totally undisciplined. That it has not been in the Power of G. Britain to procure Troops in Germany to supply the Place of those which they had sent from Hanover to Gibraltar. That England, Ireland and Hanover are almost intirely defenceless on Account of the Troops already sent from thence to this Country. They farther say that the Losses which the West India Trade suffered the last Year, which their Merchants in their Petition to the Admiralty say Amounted to One Million Eight hundred Sterling has determined the British Government to Send out a Number of Armed Cutters to take our small Cruizers. That the West Indiamen will in future be Armed as is usual in Time of War. That in Consequence of their Losses Insurance was 28 per Cent. And that Nothing had given such Surprize thro Europe as the Success of our privateering Business. That a Bill to grant Letters of Mark was passing in Parliament and that the Press for Seamen continued Very Violent tho' not equally productive as it had been, which together with the great Preparations in France and Spain with the sure Protection which our Ships received in their Ports, forbid every Expectation that Peace would continue long between those Powers. Some other matters mentioned likewise confirm these Expectations. That fresh Disputes have begun between the Courts of Constantionople & Petersbrough which would probably rekindle the Flame of War in that Quarter. Our Freinds advice us that if G Britain does not succeed in her Veiws of Subduing us this year, her Prospects must be at an End. That therefore We should be prepared to meet fresh Forces, should [they] be sent against us, with proportionable Exertion on our part. That tho' it is highly probable that G Britain may Soon find Employment nearer Home, yet to be in the best Condition is to be in the State of the best Defence. That the conduct of States as well as Individuals is not always governed by Interest but are sometimes influenced by a trifling Contingency. That in a matter so consequential nothing ought to be left to Chance which can be avoided.

This is sir the Substance of What News &c I tho't it might be proper for me to Acquaint you with.



That the British Administration are inflamed with the Strongest Passions of Pride, Avarice and Revenge is what We have no Reason to doubt of and that they will put every Thing to the most desperate Hazard rather than fail of accomplishing their Wishes, which is it seems is the utter Destruction of the N. England Countrys and Subjecting the Rest to a military Government. If they were not most strongly impressed with these Passions they would pay more Regard to the Voice of Opposition in their own country which is so Very loud, and to the Increasing Bankruptcies which have lately greatly multiplied amongst them, and to the Threatening Aspect of their Neighbours Circumstances, which a People not totally infatuated, would View as portending the most direfull Consequences. A circumstance of the Ferocity of the British Court may be learnt from their offering to deliver the Prisoners taken on Long Island to the East India Company to be sent to their settlements, in Case they would send to Gibraltar for them. This Proposition We have an Authentick Account of, was Recorded in the Compy Book and that the Genl. Assembly met to consider of the Offer. This Shews the extreme Malice of that Government. But God Reigns and Will I believe Blast the Designs of these unrelenting Tyrants.

That N England will be a principal object with the Enemy the next Campaign I think not only Probable because their Malice would dictate such a Measure, but they must feel the necessity of bringing the War to a speedy Close which they will not consider as affected in any very considerable Degree while the N England Countrys are unsubdued.

The Enemy have put on an Appearance as tho they intend an Expedition to this City which occasions the Removal of Stores &c, also an order to the Militia to be ready in Case of Emergency, and a direction to form a Camp near the City to which they may repair and join the continental troops. These Steps are doubtless Well, but Whatever the present Views of the Enemy may be, their final object I apprehend is Hudsons River and the Eastward.

You will sir kindly accept my most sincere Wishes for your Happiness and be assured that I am with Sentiment of esteem, your most Obedient humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott.

P.S. I should have mentioned to you Sir that the Committee from N York and Virginia inclusive who met as you have doubtless heard to Consider of the expediency of fixing Prices &c similar to what was done in N England are dissolved without doing any Thing.<sup>2</sup> It may therefore be an object worthy of Consideration whether We ought to Continue our Embargo Law respecting Prices &c.

The Policy and even Practicability of the Measure has been denied here. How this is I believe the N England Governments by this Time have had the full Information of Experience to convince them. But if We sell and restrain our Trade in a lower and more confined Way than our Neighbours We cannot be upon an equal footing with them.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> George Wylls (1710–1796) had succeeded his father as secretary of the colony of Connecticut in 1730 and as town clerk of Hartford in 1732 and continued to serve in both public capacities until his death. *DAB*.

<sup>2</sup> The proceedings of this convention of the middle states had been read in Congress on April 15. *JCC*, 7:267–68.

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Sir,

Philada April 18th 1777

The enclosed Proceedings of Congress will convey to you such Information as may be necessary for your future Conduct in the Department immediately under your Care. I am however particularly to request your attention to the Resolve founded upon Intelligence the Congress have received of a Design to destroy the Ferry Boats about Saratoga with a View of obstructing the Movements of our Army at the Time the Enemy may arrive from Canada.<sup>1</sup>

The internal Foes of American Freedom have been lately making Attempts to accomplish our Destruction in this Place. Since the Execution of Molesworth, a Gang of Conspirators has been detected; and seven or eight were yesterday and today committed to Goal for carrying on a traiterous Correspondence with our Enemies, or conniving at it.<sup>2</sup> How far their Guilt will be made to appear, I am not able to determine. But Vigilance and Vigour in the Administration of our Affairs, will, I trust, defeat their deep laid Schemes, and enable us finally to triumph over the dark & wicked Machinations of our secret Foes, and the Designs of our open, tho not less cruel and implacable, Enemies. I have the Honour to be, with the utmost Esteem & Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Sevt.

John Hancock Presidt.

RC (NH*i*). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> The resolve last mentioned by Hancock is in *JCC*, 7:273. The “enclosed Proceedings” have not been identified, but perhaps they included Congress’ resolves of April 9, 10, and 14 on the reorganization of military hospitals and the revision of the articles of war. *JCC*, 7:231–37, 244–46, 264–66.

<sup>2</sup> For further details about the case of one of these conspirators, John Brown, alias John Lee, see *JCC*, 7:374, 8:382–83.

## John Hancock to Patrick Henry and to the Massachusetts Council

Gentlemen,

Philada. April 18th. 1777.

I have the Honour to enclose you the Resolves of Congress ordering Monuments to be erected to the Memories of Genls. Warren and Mercer,<sup>1</sup>

and to request you will take proper Measures for carrying the Resolve into Execution relative to the latter.<sup>2</sup> You will perceive the Congress have voted five Hundred Dollars for this Purpose.

Every Mark of Distinction shewn to the Memory of those illustrious Men who offer up their Lives for the Liberty & Happiness of their Country, reflects the truest Honour upon those who pay the Tribute; and by holding up to others the Prospects of Fame & Immortality will animate them to tread in the same Path. I have the Honour to be, Gentlemen, your most obed. & very hble Svt.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:242-43, 258.

<sup>2</sup> Or "the former" in the case of Massachusetts.

## Marine Committee to Benjamin Dunn

Sir

Philadelphia 18th April 1777

The Navy Board of this State having made application for the Assistance of Such Continental Cruizers as can with propriety be employed to defend the Cape May Channel in Delaware Bay against the enemies Ships and tenders now mollesting the trade at the Capes,<sup>1</sup> We have thought proper in compliance with their request to order the Andrea Doria, Surprize, & Fly <sup>2</sup> on this service. You are therefore to proceed soon as it is possible with the Sloop Surprize under your Command down the Cape May Channel until you join the Andrea Doria, where you will put yourself under the command of your Senior officer Captain Isaiah Robinson and in conjunction with him and the Gallies of this State exert your utmost abilities to secure the communication between this City and the Sea by means of that Channel, You must to the utmost of your power protect and assist all American Vessels inward or outward bound, and you are also to exert your utmost abilities and address to take, Sink, burn or destroy any or all of the enemies Ships that may come in your way.

When this service does not require your further attention consult your senior officer, and with his concurrence you may open the other orders given you herewith and proceed upon the execution of them. Remember there is a Cargo on board the Surprize and you will be careful not to expose it unnecessarily to risque of being lost or taken.

We are Sir, Your hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> The Pennsylvania Navy Board made this request in an April 17 letter to the Marine Committee. *Pa. Archives*, 2d ser. 1:133. The Navy Board's origins and functions are described in John W. Jackson, *The Pennsylvania Navy, 1775-1781: The Defense of the Delaware* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1974), ch. 7.

<sup>2</sup> On this day the Marine Committee also wrote a letter to Capt. Elisha Warner, commander of the *Fly*, ordering him to join with the *Andrew Doria* and *Surprise* "for the purpose of securing a Communication & passage between this City and the Sea and to protect and assist all American vessels inward and outward bound as well as to oppose the enemy all in their power." PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book, fols. 68-69; and Paullin, *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:97-98.

## Marine Committee to Isaiah Robinson

Sir

April 18th 1777

The Navy Board of this State having requested the assistance of the Continental Navy in defending the Cape May Channel in Delaware Bay so that the inward and outward bound Trade may not be totally obstructed by the enemies ships stationed at the mouth of said Bay,

The Brigantine *Andrea Doria* being now ready for service you are forthwith to proceed down the Cape May Channel and Co-operate with the two Gallies sent down by the said Navy Board the Commanders of which will be instructed to Consult with and be directed by you in pursuing such measures as may be necessary to secure and defend the said Channel as well as in any attempt you may think it proper and prudent to make on such of the enemies Tenders and Vessels as you may judge your force equal to Cope with, and you will exert your utmost abilities and address, to take, sink, burn or otherwise destroy, any or all of their Cruizers you meet with.

You will particularly attend to the business of protecting our Trade and procuring any American Vessels inward or outward bound to which you can extend protection or assistance. The Gallies of this state whilst acting in conjunction with you will be subject to your orders. They draw Little water and have heavy Canon in their Bows which induces us to think they might be very successfully employed in mollesting and galling the enemies larger Ships lying at Anchor in the Road or any part of the Bay especially by attacking them in the Night. The Gallies might run into shoal water on the shoals nearest to where the ships anchored and take such a Station that the large ships could not get near them, bring the Bow Guns to bear on the Enemy and keep up a Constant firing until they obliged them to weigh Anchor or slip their Cables. Calm weather will be the best for this sort of business, because the enemies ships would remain unmanageable and the Gallies could Row and do what they pleased. If attacks of this kind are frequently made and with success they will get tired of Anchoring and prefer keeping the sea which will give our vessels a better chance of geting in and out. We would like to have this plan attempted and think you would do well to go in one of the Gallies on the first Occasion taking care not to disgust the Captain of her thereby, but you will be the better able to judge what



can be done afterwards. When you find the service herein recommended does not require your particular attention, either by means of your taking or destroying the enemies Tenders or by their quitting the Station, you may then deem these orders to be fully complied with and opening the others given you herewith proceed as therein directed. And as you have a valuable Cargo on board you will during this service be particularly attentive to the safety of the Andrea Doria and her Cargo, only exposing her to danger when you are sensible the true Interest or honor of America requires it.

We are sir,

Your hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

## Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings

April 18th. 1777

Come. met. Present Morris, Lee, Lewis, Whipple. Order on J. Gibson Esqr. A. G. in favor of Messrs. Meredith & Clymer for 2133  $\frac{1}{3}$  dlls being the amount of their valuation of their Sloop Peggy chartered & insured by the Come. sd. sloop being taken on her way to Martinique by the Enemy's ship of war the Orpheus on the 4th July last, as appears by the Masters Protest taken before Js. Humphreys, Noty. pub. on the 30th day of Augt. last.<sup>1</sup> Issued the follg. drafts on the Audit. genl. [*in*] favor G. Meade & Co. for 54  $\frac{26}{90}$  dlls being the amount of an Invoice of staves shipped by them on board the Brige. Freindship of St Eustatia for 3680 dlls, amt. of their Acct. dated the 10th March last. Do. for 1253  $\frac{11}{90}$  dlls balance of their Acct. for freight & charges on the Brige. Friendship.

MS (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> This apparently superseded an earlier order. See Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings, September 12, 1776.

## George Walton to Lachlan McIntosh

18 April 1777

I freely confess to you my dear General that some pains have been taken to shake my friendship for your virtues & to lessen the good opinion of the Continent—but be assured that they never obtained credit with either. I have been privately interragated as to the firmness of your principles in this great cause, in which I know you always to have been an enthusiast, and to have seen deeper, earlier and farther into it than any other man. That ample Justice has been done you upon all such occasions I hope you will not doubt. However a mans reputation may be obscured by the puffs



George Walton

& smoke of a rotten hearted designing enemy, his virtues will soon shine out with their wonted Lustre and acquire fresh brilliancy from the outrage intended. In Congress your name has never been mentioned but as their Officer in general terms with others. Your enemys have not dared to impeach you before that August Assembly yet; and I believe never will. They meant to ruin you indirectly. In my judgment it was intended to tease you into a resignation as they have done your brother.<sup>1</sup> If I had not come to Congress last summer your present *Alexander* would have been in your place; but I sounded the alarm when I discovered the deep laid design.<sup>2</sup> This great Hero that has set our Country in a flame cannot last long & no gentleman could have suffered long under accusations trumped up for time serving purposes. I find that the Laws are taken out of the Judges hands and exercised by your dictator who I presume has suspended the Habeas Corpus Act as I find no writ was brought upon a certain occasion.<sup>3</sup> I am treading upon delicate ground in my present situation. If I was at home I would speak my mind in the market place against this Lord of the earth.<sup>4</sup>

Do my dear General set apart some occasional hours for writing to me, you are too reserved when you have good opportunitys. I shall complain of your caution if you repeat it.

I am, Dear General, with the most sincere regard and esteem, Your most sincere Friend and very humble servant,                      Geo Walton

Tr (DLC). Headed: "Extracts of a letter from George Walton Esqr at Philadelphia to General McIntosh in Georgia dated 18 April 1777."

<sup>1</sup> Probably William McIntosh. See "The Papers of Lachlan McIntosh, 1774-1799," ed. Lilla M. Hawes, *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 39 (1955): 173-74.

<sup>2</sup> Button Gwinnett had apparently wanted the position of brigadier general to which Lachlan McIntosh had been promoted in September 1776. Their personal rivalry, which was in part a manifestation of Whig factionalism in Georgia politics, continued to grow, and in his January 23, 1777, letter to the Georgia delegates, McIntosh had warned that "a Spirit of Envy, J[e]alousy [and] Thirst of Office unfortunately appears among us, which may retard & throw Stumbling blocks in the way, that may injure the Confederacy at Large & this State in particular." *Ibid.*, 38 (1954): 358. When Gwinnett, who had recently become president of Georgia by his own vote, undertook an ill-conceived expedition against St. Augustine in March, he only belatedly requested assistance from McIntosh, the Continental commander of Georgia troops. Furthermore, McIntosh opposed Gwinnett's attempt to assume civil control over Continental forces; and the expedition, which was eventually commanded by Col. Samuel Elbert, ended in failure. When the Georgia Assembly upheld Gwinnett's conduct, McIntosh allegedly called Gwinnett "a Scoundrell & lying Rascal," whereupon Gwinnett issued a challenge. Both men were wounded in the duel that followed, and Gwinnett died three days later. For further discussion of the Gwinnett-McIntosh feud, see Alexander A. Lawrence, "General Lachlan McIntosh and His Suspension from Continental Command during the Revolution," *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 38 (1954): 110-17; and Charles F. Jenkins, *Button Gwinnett: Signer of the Declaration of Independence* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1926), pp. 141-54.

<sup>3</sup> Apparently a reference to the charges against Lachlan's brother George, for which see John Hancock to Archibald Bulloch, January 8, 1777, note.

<sup>4</sup> Walton continued his criticism of Button Gwinnett in his May 1 letter to Lachlan McIntosh. In the interim Walton apparently made a trip to Virginia on state business because his April 22 letter to Col. John Stirk, discussing his accounts with Georgia officers that were recruiting in Virginia, was written from Prince Edward, Va. NJMoHP.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 19. 1777

We have now an ample Representation from N. York. It consists of Six Delegates, and they are to all Appearance, as high, as decisive, and as determined, as any Men ever were, or can be.

There is a new Hand, a Mr. Duer, who is a very fine fellow—a Man of sense, Spirit and Activity, and is exceeded by no Man in Zeal. Mr. Duane and Mr. Phillip Livingston are apparently, as determined as any Men in Congress.

You will see by the inclosed Newspaper, that Duane and Jay have arrived at the Honour of being ranked, with the Two Adams's. I hope they will be duely sensible, of the illustrious Distinction, and be sure to behave in a manner becoming it.

This is the Anniversary of the ever memorable 19 April 1775. Two compleat Years We have maintained open War, with Great Britain and her Allies, and after all our Difficulties and Misfortunes, are much abler to cope with them now than We were at the Beginning.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:213–14.

## James Duane to Certain Members of the New York Convention

My dear Sirs

Philad 19th April 1777

We<sup>1</sup> arrivd in this City on Wednesday afternoon. If you talk seriously to its Inhabitants you'll find them full of the Expectation of a Visit from Genl Howe; examine their Conduct and the Appearance of everything about you, & you cannot but conclude that they are in a State of the most perfect Tranquility and Security. Talk to them about the scandalous depreciation of the continental and other paper money; and the extravagant Prices of all Commodities, they may go so far as to express their Concern; but they affect to consider it as an immediate misfortune and nothing is farther from their thoughts than to provide a plan for reformation. Their supreme executive have *adjourn'd themselves for a month*. *Executive* adjourn'd, say you, how is that possible? Sirs they *have* adjourn'd; not for



want of Business, for surely no Country ever cried more loudly for a vigilant, active and decisive Government. They have adjourn'd because—faith I cannot tell you why—perhaps for the want of authority to save their Country under their new Constitution—perhaps for want of Resolution to exercise the powers they have. Under these Circumstances, the civil Governours having in effect abdicated for a month, Congress have interposd and supplied an executive as you'l observe by the Resolution enclosd.<sup>2</sup> With the free consent of the *sleeping* executive, Congress might have taken the whole power of the State into their Hands and provided for it's Safety as they pleasd. It is evident that this same supreme executive are under apprehensions that must encumber and defeat all Business. They must not make themselves *Odious!* The People may not be satisfied with such a Measure! They wish Congress woud direct what they think best! They will chearfully submit every thing to our superior wisdom, &c. &c. I am of Opinion that Congress will recommend the Revival of the Committees of Inspection &c as essential to the Salvation of the State. It is truly the only System which can give sufficient Vigour, Unanimity and Stability to publick Measures. These refined Speculative Plans may amuse; in times of peace they may produce Happiness; but *flagrante bello* they afford no Hope of Success, no Prospect of Advantage.

The Reputation of our State stands high tho' on the floor we are surrounded with Strangers. This is an evil which will be cured by good manners and sociability. It is in our power to be *civil*, as we keep House, and shall always have company when we dine at Home. I say we keep House, as we have taken a boarding House for our exclusive use.

We have got a Committee appointed of one member from each State to examine into General Schuyler's Conduct, but not without great difficulty and objections from our neighbours. It was pretended that there was no Complaint against him, no accuser & that therefore an Enquiry was absurd. This subtle Evasion did not pass. I am confident that Schuyler will be acquitted with Honour.<sup>3</sup>

Doctor Young formerly of our State has published an address to our Mountaineers advising them to be firm in their Revolt; and expressly assuring them that this is the opinion & wish of many leading members of Congress.<sup>4</sup> Col. Floyd informd us that he had not been able, tho' he livd with Roger Sherman, to make the least discovery of such a disposition.

I have only time now to add that I am with Compliments to all our Friends and the utmost Regard to yourselves, Dear Gent., your most obed,  
huml Servt,

Jas. Duane

RC (NNC). Addressed: "Robt. R. Livingston, John Jay, Govr. Morris & Robt Yates Esqrs." Although the recipients were members of the New York Convention, they were not charged with responsibility for communicating with the state's delegates to Congress and Duane's motive in addressing them is not known.

<sup>1</sup> Duane and Philip Livingston.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:268–69; and William Duer to the New York Convention, April 17, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> See Philip Schuyler to Richard Varick, April 16, 1777, note 3.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Young's April 11 address, "To the Inhabitants of Vermont, A Free and Independent State," was printed beneath a copy of Congress' resolve of May 15, 1776, urging the colonies to set up new provincial governments. *PCC*, item 78, 2:159.

## Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull

My dear sir

Philadelphia April 19. 1777

If the affairs of your Department will any Ways admit of your coming to this place, it appears to me necessary at this Time, as well on account of yourself as the publick.<sup>1</sup> Congress are about adopting new Regulations for supplying the Troops with Vegetables & Vinegar in sufficient Quantities to preserve the Health of the Army, & also intend regulating the purchases & Issues, together with other Matters of Moment wherein You can greatly serve the Continent by being present.

Great abuses have taken place in the Commissary's Department in the middle States, which have engaged the attention not only of Congress but of the public at large. I have not heard any persons lisp Complaints against the Commissary General, but I am informed plans are on Foot relative to Contracts wch do not yet openly appear.<sup>2</sup> I am sir in Haste  
yours sincerely,  
E Gerry

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Congress had appointed a committee on March 14 "to enquire into the conduct of the commissaries." Its initial report, calling for the commissaries to be commissioned by Congress "under proper regulations," was read and adopted by Congress on April 14. Four days later, Trumbull was directed "to repair with all despatch, to Philadelphia."

The committee subsequently met with Trumbull and submitted a report on the state of supplies, which is printed with Congress' proceedings of April 23, although its date is not known. A document dated April 28 containing several "Queries" that Commissary Trumbull submitted to the committee, with the committee's responses (in an unidentified hand) to each question, is in the Joseph Trumbull Papers, CtHi. A further report on the commissary department was brought before Congress on May 14, and was sporadically considered until June 14, when extensive regulations for the commissary department were adopted. See *JCC*, 7:177, 266–67, 279, 292–94, 301, 354, 8:384, 386, 394, 404–6, 409–10, 414–15, 427, 433–48.

During his talks with the committee Trumbull specified financial terms of "½ per cent to myself, and 2½ to the purchasers." "This they Choak at," he explained in a May 17 letter to Jeremiah Wadsworth, "but I am determined to have my own Terms or have nothing." When Congress voted him a salary of "8 dollars per day and 6 rations per day," he therefore found the offer unacceptable. "Congress have at last completed the new regulations of the Commissary Department. It does not suit me. I shall get some alterations, or decline the appointment which was unanimous in my favr. They direct me to keep an office in

Phila. & to be always present there myself or clerk. This I shall get altered or decline, as the sum allowed me would not maintain me in that most extravagant place." See Burnett, *Letters*, 2:364n.2; *JCC*, 8:469; and *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, 7th ser. 2 (1902): 65-66.

Despite the efforts of the congressional committee, of which Gerry was a member, to straighten out the commissary department to everyone's satisfaction, Trumbull sent a letter of resignation to President Hancock on August 2. Congress subsequently authorized him to continue his duties until "the commissaries general of purchases and issues shall signify their readiness to proceed therein under the new regulations," and then on August 7 replaced him with William Buchanan. *JCC*, 8:598, 607, 620.

See also Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*, 14:101-5; and Chester M. Destler, *Connecticut: The Provisions State* (Chester, Conn.: Pequot Press, 1973), pp. 28-31.

<sup>2</sup> On the previous day James Lovell had written to Trumbull urging him to attend Congress: "It is exceedingly critical you shd. be here directly . . . There seems to be a mighty rising fancy for contracts in a scheming set of politicians here." Extract in *Parke-Bernet Galleries Catalog*, no. 2205 (September 24, 1963), p. 26, item 93. Endorsed by John Hancock: "Sir. It is the Direction of Congress that you Repair with all Dispatch to Philadelphia. John Hancock, Pres. To Col. Joseph Trumbull, Philadelphia, 20 April 1777." The extract from Lovell's letter apparently refers to the proposal of Col. William Buchanan of Baltimore to supply the army by contract. See Roger Sherman to Joseph Trumbull, April 2, 1777.

## John Hancock to John McKinly

Sir,

Philada. April 19th. 1777.

I have the Honour to transmit you the above Resolutions of Congress, accompanied with a Warrant on the Loan Officer for fifteen Hundred Dollars for the Use therein specified.<sup>1</sup> I must beg the Favour of you to forward in the most expeditious Manner, the enclosed Letter to Mr. Henry Fisher. I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed & very hble Serv.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Honble John McKinley, Govr. of Delaware State."

<sup>1</sup> This money was for a guard Congress had asked Delaware to station at Lewes on March 26. *JCC*, 7:203, 275.

## Marine Committee to Benjamin Dunn

Sir

April 19th 1777

We gave you orders yesterday respecting the service you are required to perform in Delaware Bay, after that is performed you are to have recourse to these Orders which you are to obey and execute soon as possible. You are to proceed with the Sloop Surprize and Cargo on board

direct for St. Nicholas Mole in Hispaniola and on your arrival there wait on the Governor to ask the liberty and protection. In this visit you will be attended by Mr. John Dupuy, Merchant at that place to whom you will deliver the letter given you herewith<sup>1</sup> and the Cargo being consigned to this Gentleman you are to deliver the same to him immediately and if this Gentleman has on hand any goods or Stores belonging to the Public, say the united states he will put the whole or as many as you can conveniently take in on board the Surprize for which you must grant bills of Lading and then proceed back to the first safe port you can get into in these united states preferring this part of the Coast if equally safe. You are to land the stores and goods wherever you arrive giving us notice thereof and employing proper Persons to take charge of them until we can direct how they are to be disposed of. We think there is sufficient water for the Surprize in Egg Harbour, several of the Inlets southern of Cape Henlopen, and in several inlets of North Carolina & probably this may be safer than the great Bays. You will be careful to keep your men on board wherever you go and take in three or four Months Provisions. We hope this business will be finished before the first day of July. Should there be no public Stores at the Mole, you may then proceed from thence on a Cruize against our enemies, get as many men as you can to enter the service on board the Surprize and exert your utmost endeavours to take, burn, Sink, and destroy as many of the enemies Ships as possible. You may send your prizes into the French Ports. Mr. John Dupuy will transact your business faithfully at the Mole as will Mr. Stephen Ceronio at the Cape François and these Gentlemen will also supply you with every thing wanting for the Service of the Sloop. You may order them to sell all perishable Prize Goods or those particularly suited to the West India Markets taking care they are actually prize agreeable to resolves of Congress, but the Vessels and other parts of the Cargoes must come to some American Port for Condemnation. In this manner you may continue Cruizing until the first day of July and should you return from the Mole and land a Cargo on the Continent as already mentioned before the first day of July, you may proceed on a Cruize for West India Ships or others in these Seas until that day. On the first day of July you are to open the sealed orders enclosed herein<sup>2</sup> and exert yourself to the utmost in the execution of them taking care that the Surprize is clean, well manned, victualled and every way in good Order for Service at that time.<sup>3</sup>

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book). Addressed: "Captain Benjamin Dunn of the Sloop Surprize."

<sup>1</sup> The Marine Committee's first known letter to Dupuy is dated April 29, 1777, and printed below.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.



<sup>3</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Marine Committee to Dunn, May 2, 1777.

## Marine Committee to Isaiah Robinson

Sir

April 19th 1777

The Marine Committee gave you Instructions of yesterdays date for performing certain services in Delaware Bay which being accomplished you are to have recourse to the following Orders which you are to obey and fulfill soon as possible. You are to proceed with the Andrea Doria and the Cargo on board direct for Cape François in Hispaniola and on your Arrival there wait on the Governor or General asking the protection and liberty of the Port. You will be attended in this visit by Mr. Stephen Ceronio to whom you must deliver the letter given you herewith and to whom the Cargo on board is consigned. This Gentleman will receive the said Cargo with despatch and if he has any public stores on hand that have been provided by him previous to your Arrival or if there be any arrived there from Europe you are to receive the whole or such part as you can conveniently take on board the Andrea Doria and return therewith to the first safe Port you can get into in the united states of America preferring this part of the Coast if equally safe. You are to land the Stores and goods wherever you arrive giving us notice thereof and employing proper persons to take charge of them until we can direct how they are to be disposed off. We believe there is sufficient water for the Andrea Doria in Egg Harbour, several of the Inlets south of Cape Henlopen, or in several Inlets in North Carolina and probably these may be safer than the great Bays. You will be careful to keep your men on board wherever you go and then take in three or four months Provisions.

We hope all this business will be finished before the first day of July. Should there be no Public Stores for these States at Cape François, you will depart from thence immediately after landing your Cargo and proceed down to Cape St. Nicholas Mole where you are to apply to Mr. John Dupuy and if he has any goods or Stores to ship receive them on board and proceed as already directed. You will get as many men to enter on board your Brig as possible at these places and should there be no stores or goods to bring away you may then proceed on a Cruize against our enemies, taking, sinking, burning and destroying as many of their Ships and Vessels as possible. You may send your Prizes into the French Ports or for the Continent preferring the later when proper and practicable. The Gentlemen mentioned will transact your business, they will supply you with whatever may be necessary, and you may order them to sell all perishable Prize goods or those suited to the West India Markets taking care they

are really and truly indisputable Prizes agreeable to Resolves of Congress, but the Vessels and other Parts of the Cargoes must come to some American Port for condemnation. In this manner you may continue Cruizing until the first day of July, and should you return from the Cape or the Mole and land a Cargo on the Continent as already mentioned before the first of July, you may proceed on a Cruise for West India Ships or others in these Seas until that day. On the first day of July you are to open the Sealed Orders enclosed herein<sup>1</sup> and exert yourself to the utmost in the execution of them taking care that the Andrea Doria is clean, well manned, victualled and every way in good Order for service at that Time.<sup>2</sup>

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Marine Committee to Robinson, May 2, 1777.

## Lewis Morris to the New York Convention

Phia April 19th 1777

I find the Convention have thought proper by a Resolve to request the Attendance of Mr Lewis, Mr Floyd and myself from the Continental Congress. In obedience to that Resolve (to which as every other of that Convention I feel myself devoted to comply with) I would instantly have set off, but flattered myself that I might presume on the Liberty of making some little delay, the reasons for which I fondly hope the Convention will think of Some weight. Unconnected as my Colleagues are, I should not have hesitated one moment to Obey the Summons, but all my family are now in the neighbourhood of this City, the constant apprehensions we are under here of the approach of the enemy, makes it prudent to remove them to some distance, and being destitute of any other assistance for that purpose than myself, I was assured that a delay occasioned from such motives would have its weight with the Convention in my favor.

However Sir, you will be pleased to assure the Convention that such is my attachment to the cause, and such the respect I bear their commands, that should they now think proper to Summon me immediately, the private considerations I have just mentioned shall give way to their determinations.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honor to be Sir, your Most obedt Humble Servt,

Lewis Morris

RC (PHi).

<sup>1</sup> After reading Morris' letter, the New York Convention decided on May 4 to "dispense with his attendance for the present." *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:911.

## Secret Committee to Robert and Samuel Purviance, Jr.

Gentn

Philada. April 19th. 1777

Your favours of the 12th & 15th Inst. came duely to hand the first advising your purchase of flour & enclosing Inventories of the Two Prize Vessells. We think the flour was bought very reasonably & mentioned it in Congress as proper to be delivered to the Commissary at Baltimore for the use of the army which was agreed to & he must settle with you for it. We entered into the consideration of purchasing the Prize Vessells immediately—for several reasons that need not be repeated, thought it best at present to decline a purchase. However we shall be glad to know who buys them & the prices they sell for, as it may probably suit to charter shou'd the purchasers want Freight. We have seen the owner of the Brimstone here & he has our offer under consideration. Respecting the Cloathing, you have purchased or have in view to purchase we refer you entirely to the Cloathier General James Mease Esqr. whose department it is to manage those affairs. It wou'd give us pleasure to hear that the Virginia, Capt Nicholson, was Sailed & your Bay clear of the Enemies Ships, there are several of them at Cape Henlopen where they have done much mischief. We are Gentn., Your obedt hble Servts. By order of the Secret Commee.

Robt Morris,<sup>1</sup> Chair Man

Tr (DLC). Copied by Edmund C. Burnett from the "Collection of George C. Thomas Esq."

<sup>1</sup> This day Morris also wrote the following note to his business associate Jonathan Hudson. "You will find herein a few lines to Mr. John Dorsius, Merchant at Charles Town South Carolina who transacts our business at that place & is a Worthy Man." NBuHi.

## William Whipple to John Langdon

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 19th April 1777.

Your favor of 31st ultimo is now before me. In conformity to your request I shall endeavor to get a draft on the Loan Office. I had that object in view when I desired you in some of my former letters to keep me advised of the state of that Office. I have never heard yet, even whether a Loan Officer is appointed, nor has Congress been informed that the resolutions for the establishment of Offices were ever rec'd in New Hampshire. In short the President complains generally that the receipt of his public letters to New Hampshire are never acknowledged. I give you this hint that you may endeavor to have this neglect rectified. It gives me pleasure to hear that the tickets go off so well. I hope fortune will smile on those who purchase on patriotic principles.

You no doubt are justifiable in delivering the arms, as to the clothing, you'll receive directions from the Clothier General. I shall pay the earliest attention to what you say respecting Roache's ship. If there is a probability of getting cannon from the Massachusetts furnace I think it best to stick close to them as the surest way of obtaining cannon for the Raleigh. The bursting of a few, I hope will not discourage the furnace from going on—not more than half those cast in the furnaces this way have stood the proof. This city is still threatened with an invasion but whether the threats will be executed or not, is a matter of doubt with me. A plan of correspondence between this City and the enemy has lately been discovered. 7 or 8 of the Traitors are under close confinement. Some of them will no doubt be hanged. This is disagreeable business, but if we dont hang them they'll hang us, and selfpreservation, you know, is the first law of nature. A considerable quantity of the goods will be saved from the ship blown up near the Capes, as mentioned in my last. She had a valuable cargo on board 400 lbs. of powder, 2500 stand of arms and a considerable quantity dry goods amounting in the whole to 250,000 livres for account of the public besides private property to a large amount—but the greatest loss is the life of the Captain whose bravery on this occasion is without example.

The establishment of a Navy Board in the Eastern Department is now in contemplation and I imagine will soon be done.<sup>1</sup> This is a necessary measure and ought to have been adopted some time ago. I am much at a loss for proper men to compose this Board. Boston, I suppose will be the place of their sitting; therefore it's probable they will be of that town, or neighborhood. My only wish is, that they may be good men. He is my choice who will best serve my country. Some gentlemen are very urgent that I would engage in this business, but it's totally against my principles to accept an office of profit created by a Legislative Body of which I am a member and to resign my seat from lucrative views would not only be treating honor done me by my constituents with indecency but be inconsistent with that patriotic delicacy, which ever affords the most agreeable reflections. These are my present sentiments nor do I by any means think I shall relinquish them. Whoever are appointed, I suppose must reside chiefly at Boston.

I wish we could have a public furnace for casting cannon set up in New Hampshire. I think I have heard that there is a large quantity of ore at Barrington and a convenient place for this business. I wish you would make inquiry about it and inform me what the ore can be purchased for, what distance it is from a convenient place for a furnace and the distance the latter is from water carriage.

I hope you will send some body to relieve me soon, as it will be very disagreeable to go a long journey in the heat of summer. My Colleague sets out in about a fortnight when I shall be left alone for New Hampshire and you know how hard the service will be then. In full confidence



that you use the utmost influence to have me relieved, I am your Sincere  
friend &c, Wm Whipple

23d. Since writing the foregoing, have rec'd your's by Capt Thompson  
who will set out in a few days. By him I shall write you fully if I can.

Tr (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> For the creation of the Navy Board at Boston, see John Adams' two letters to James Warren, April 6, 1777.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror,

Philadelphia 19 Apl 1777

Yours of 31st Ulto is now before me, I hope to make a good use of the information therein given me respecting Masts, & shall be glad of further light on the subject, which you give me incouragement to hope for. All the Musquets imported from France have small bores but they are such as are use'd in the French Army, it is to [*be*] wish'd they were larger but if they are well handled they'll answer the Purpose. The Enemies Cruisers are very thick on this coast, & take many of our vessels, I mean Merchantmen. I wish the two Schooners you sent to Baltimore may escape, one of them sail'd some time ago, the other I expect is gone before this time.

This City is Still threatened with an invasion, but I am of opinion the Enemy will not put their threats in Execution. They certainly will not give up their grand scheme of forming a conjunction of their two Armies, if they shod send part of their Army this way, they will be so divided as to become an easy pray to us, provided our troops behave with a spirit becoming Americans, & they certainly can have no prospect of any considerable reinforcement from Europe, as by all accounts from thence there will be full employ for all the troops that can be rais'd there. The post at Ticonderoga is still very weak, by the last returns from thence, there was no more than 136 Rank & file of Col. Longs Regt. What can this mean? There was no other N.H. Troops there the 1st inst., except about 50 of Starks. I am really surpris'd that there shod be such delays at this Critical juncture, if greater exertions are not use'd there is great danger that the Enemy will make an impression on that part of the Country which will certainly be attended with very evil consequences, tho' even in that case I shall by no means think the Cause lost, for in my Opinion New England alone are able to Support their Freedom. However, I flatter myself we shall not be put to the Trial, for there is not the least probability that Britain will be able to support the Contest another Year, if we only keep her where she is this Year.

The accots from Our Commissioners are not so perticular as I could wish. The reason given is that they don't like to trust them in Merchant

Ships as there has been some instances of the Masters carelessness of their letters when they have been taken, but we very soon expect a packet, when I flatter myself shall be able to give you some joyful Tidings. Prizes taken by American Vessels are freely sold in France, the inclos'd Copy of a letter from a Gentn. who is never mistaken in his intelligence will shew you the scituation of the Court of Spain with that of England.<sup>1</sup> A fresh quarrel is breaking out between the Turks and Russians, all these things Auger well for America. Your Most effecte. Brother, Wm Whipple

23d This was to have gone by a private hand which I unluckely missed. I have now to acknowledge the receipt of Yours by Mr. Jackson and also the 17 per Post which I have not time at present to reply fully to. The loan Officer will have orders from time to time from The Treasury Board but he can pay no money that comes into his hands without special orders for that purpose. I shall write you fully per Capt Thompson who will set out in a few days. W W

Its probable I may have use'd various seals as I was obligd to Borrow till a Friend took pity on me & gave me one below in the impression.

RC (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> The "inclos'd Copy" has not been identified, but see John Adams to James Warren, and James Lovell to James Bowdoin, April 16, 1777.

## John Hancock to Thomas Johnson and John McKinly

Sir,

Philada. April 20th. 1777.

I have the Honour to transmit you the enclosed Resolves and am most earnestly to entreat you will adopt the Measures therein recommended. The Danger of an immediate Insurrection in the Counties of Somerset and Worcester in the State of Maryland & in the County of Sussex in the State of Delaware, from the inimical Disposition manifested by a considerable Part of the Inhabitants, has induced Congress to desire that those among them who have shewn a Disaffection to the Cause of America, may be apprehended and secured, in Hopes that their wicked Designs may be thereby defeated.<sup>1</sup>

I beg Leave to refer your Attention to the Resolves, which are so explicit, that I shall not enlarge, only to request you will carry them into Execution with that Dispatch & Vigour which their Importance to the Peace of your State in particular, and of America in General, so loudly demands. I have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obedt. & very hble Sert.

J. H. Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Honble Thos. Johnson Govr. of Maryland. Honble John Mckinley Govr. of Delaware State."

<sup>1</sup> On April 19 Congress approved a report of the committee appointed on the 17th "to devise ways and means of suppressing the spirit of toryism in the counties of Somerset, Worcester, and Sussex" calling upon the Delaware and Maryland authorities to disarm and remove disaffected persons in those counties. See *JCC*, 7:275, 284–86; and Benjamin Rumsey to Thomas Johnson, April 17, 1777.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. April 20th. 1777

Your Favour of the 18th continued to the 19th I was this Day honored with at two O'Clock, and shall lay the same before Congress tomorrow Morning.<sup>1</sup>

The enclosed Resolves<sup>2</sup> are all that have passed in Congress since my last, which are either necessary for your Information, or the Direction of your Conduct. I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them, & with sincere and ardent Wishes for your Health, Happiness, and Prosperity, have the Honour to be, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

[P.S.] Should Mr Commissary Trumbull be at Head Quarters, I am to request you will order him to Repair to Congress at Philada.<sup>3</sup>

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 152, 4:80–87, and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:433–38.

<sup>2</sup> Hancock sent Washington resolves of April 17–19 on the formation of the Committee for Foreign Affairs, the inspection of magazines, the resignation of John Trumbull, the denial of provisions to the British, and disaffection in Maryland. *JCC*, 7:274, 280–81, 283–86.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:279.

## Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee

My dear Brother,

Philadelphia April 20th 1777

It gave me inexpressible pleasure to find by your joint letter from Paris to Congress that you were safely arrived in France. As well on your own account I was rejoiced, as on that of my Country, well knowing with what zeal and ability the cause of America and of mankind will be served by you. Heaven grant you may be as successful in your negotiations as you wish to be and as the greatest and most virtuous cause that the sun ever shone on deserves. That the exertions of America will be firm, and great as are in her power, you may rely upon with absolute confidence, but then it ought not to be forgotten by those who wish our eternal separations from Great Britain, that the single strength of North America opposed

to the united force of Great Britain and her Allies may prove an unequal contest, and should not be trusted too far. The difficulty of finding funds whilst our Trade is shut up by a superior marine strength, is very distressing and would find present relief, if the United Fleets of Spain & France were to fall on that of G.B. in its present state of inferiority. It amazes me that the Politicians of these two Kingdoms do not see with what certainty they may, in conjunction with N. America humble the pride and power of Britain, as well as that if the latter accomplish their plan of subjugating America, the force of both must & will be applied to attack the American possessions of the House of Bourbon. It is now in the power of Spain, with ease to get the Harbor of Pensacola for her homeward bound Ships, and surely the power of Great Britain & N. America divided can never be so dangerous to her as when united, abstracted from the consideration of gratitude that must bind to her the affection of virtuous young republics for timely and effectual aid afforded them in the day of their distress. It will be very long before such kindness will be forgotten. Since the 24th of December, we have been in a constant train of success against the enemy, and from that time, during the whole winters Campaign, for it has never stopt, we have reduced the enemies force at least 4000 men. They have been confined to the Hills of Brunswick in New Jersey the whole winter, and there they remain now, their foraging parties have been so beaten and driven back that their distress has been great & their horses have died in numbers. And this has been done chiefly by Militia, our regular Army having been dispersed last fall in consequence of short enlistments which had taken place in Spring 1776 in the uncertain State that our affairs were then under. The Levies for forming a new regular Army for duration are now moving up to Head Quarters in Jersey from all the States, and an Army is forming at Ticonderoga ready to meet Gen Carleton as soon as the ice permits him to cross Lake Champlain. But we are greatly retarded by the necessity we are under of passing all our Troops thro inoculation before they join the Army. And this I fear will prevent us from taking advantage of the enemies weakness and presumption in remaining where they are before they get reinforced. Brunswick (on the hills near which the enemy are fortified) is in New Jersey upon the river Rareton which communicates with the Sea at Amboy near New York. The Rareton is not navigable for ships, but for small Craft, and it is about 12 miles from Brunswick to Amboy, so that you find they keep pretty nigh to their Ships. What a fine stroke it would be for a Spanish Fleet to remove their small Ships of War, which would effectually deliver their Army into our hands. And it would not quickly be in the power of England to recover this blow. Except two, the other States have fixed, and are exercising their new Governments which you may well suppose must add greatly to our force, safety,



and success. We have 13 Frigates nearly finished and some of them at Sea. Our Privateers you know have been very successful and still continue to be so. You cannot imagine what universal joy and spirit it would give to North America if Spain and France were now to Attack Great Britain. The success wd. be infallible, and the independence of America immoveably fixed.

Before this reaches you, the former dispatches will be arrived, by which you will see that Congress had proposed Doctor Franklin to attend the Court of Spain whilst you remained at Paris, but I suppose you have jointly considered that it may do as well for you to be at Madrid, and perhaps the Doctors age might render it inconvenient for him to travel so far. However, proper powers have long since been sent to Doctor Franklin appointing him to the Court of Spain altho he is not deprived of right still to represent these States at the Court of France.<sup>1</sup>

My obligation to you will never cease for taking care of my dear boys. But heaven knows what I shall do about making remittance whilst our Trade continues so obstructed by British Cruisers. Almost all the Frigates & Sloops of England are now employed against us. I have written to our brother,<sup>2</sup> who I expect will be in France by the time this reaches there, proposing if possible, that Thom should be employed as his Clerk or Secretary whilst he remains in France, and that Ludwell be instructed in Military matters, but more especially eloquence, and the principles of Natural law, that he may here turn either to War or to the Law. But if this cannot be done, that they be both sent to me by the first of our Vessels of War that come to this Country. My wish, and my earnest wish, is, to put them both in a situation to be of service to their country, and beneficial to themselves, but since the times admit not of remittances being made, that one of them, or both, as the case may be, that cannot be somehow employed in France so as to get a subsistence, I would have sent to me by the first of our Vessels that is most likely to bring him safely. By ours, I do not mean Virginia Vessels, for you know our trade used to be carried on, almost entirely, in British Bottoms, so that few if any Ships from Virga. will for some time be sent to France; which renders it of great importance indeed to both Countries that the latter should force her Trade with the former thro the British Cruizers. It would benefit both amazingly, and every assistance will be given on our part.<sup>3</sup>

RC (ViU).

<sup>1</sup> See Committee of Secret Correspondence to Benjamin Franklin, January 1, 1777, note.

<sup>2</sup> Lee's letter to William Lee has not been found. For the arrangements made for his sons in France, see Richard Henry's May 10, 1777, letter to Thomas and Ludwell Lee, note 1.

<sup>3</sup> For the continuation of this letter, see Richard Henry Lee to Arthur Lee, May 31, 1777.

## New York Delegates to the New York Convention

Sir,

Philadelphia, April 21st, 1777.

We yesterday moved for a Copy of the Representation from our revolted Subjects to Congress.<sup>1</sup> A Member from the Massachusetts would have made it a Condition that a copy of your Remonstrance should be delivered to him, for the use of the Revolters, insisting that we and they were perfectly on an equal Footing, stating us the parties &c. This brought on some altercation, not to the Advantage of this open and avowed Advocates for the disturbers of the public peace and general union. In the Conclusion, the paper we moved for was ordered to be delivered.<sup>2</sup> On our parts we assured the House that tho' we should not suffer the State of New York to be put on a Level with a small part of its disaffected Subjects, yet we had no Secret on this occasion; that any Member had our free Consent to take a Copy, and make such use of it as he might think proper. Here it ended.

We have obtained and transmit a copy of a printed address from Doctor Young to the insurgents in our State, in which he positively asserts that he has taken the Minds of several of the leading Members of Congress, and then proceeds to give them their advice. This paper, corresponding with the Hints we had from the Committee sent into Cumberland, renders it unnecessary to trouble you about further proof. Doctor Young is on the Spot; if he has injured his Friends they have the Means of ample Satisfaction, for they can call him before the House. However, we do not observe that the Imputation gives any Uneasiness to the suspected Members, tho' we are well assured it has made strong Impressions to their Disadvantage on the Minds of other gentlemen. What Notice Convention ought to take of this insolent Address does not lie with us to determine; nor have we yet concluded on the part we shall pursue in Congress. It is our Business to move deliberately, as from the Change of Members we find ourselves surrounded with Strangers. To cultivate their Esteem and good opinion is of moment, considering the unfriendly views of some States and the magnitude of the business committed to our Charge. A Committee consisting of one member from each State, is appointed to examine into the Conduct of General Schuyler.<sup>3</sup> It was not done without warm opposition. There was no accuser, no Complaint, no Charge against the General. Nothing had ever been said to his disadvantage or dishonour in that House. Directing the inquiry was an implied Censure, or at least an indication of Suspicion, which should be avoided. These were the arguments against the appointment of a Committee. A single Remark was sufficient to refute them. If the General had done his Duty faithfully, why was his authority pared away to Nothing, and the Command of the Army, in Effect, transferred from him to

General Gates, a Junior officer? We can entertain no Apprehension, but that the General will be honourably acquitted, tho' it is obvious enough that pains have been taken to injure his Character.

The feeble, inactive Condition of Pennsylvania is a sad proof how little their new Constitution is calculated for Security or Defense in time of Danger. Their executive Authority appears to be sensible of their weakness and lean with their whole weight upon Congress, who have found it necessary to recommend a temporary system to prevent the Ruin of the Cause, as far as it is connected with this State; to this will be added a Recommendation to revive the general Committees, for Nothing can be substituted in the place of this Institution equally salutary, or which can produce so much Union, Energy and Vigour.<sup>4</sup> The Spirit of the Legislature under the new Constitution here is strongly marked in their Militia Act, which provides that if a Colonel or other officer shall strike a Soldier while upon Duty, he shall forfeit a Sum not less than five nor more than ten pounds, but if the soldier shall strike or draw upon his Colonel or other officer while on duty he shall be fined a sum—not exceeding £5!

We beg Leave to assure you Sir, that we shall exert our most zealous Endeavors for the Interest and Honor of our State on every occasion: and it gives us singular pleasure that your honorable Body maintain a high rank in the Estimation of Congress, as well as of the General and army, which cannot but greatly contribute to our Success in every just and reasonable Measure. We have the Honor to be with the utmost regard,

Phil Livingston

Jas. Duane

Wm. Duer

RC (N). Written by Duer and signed by Duer, Duane, and Livingston. *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:475–76. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> The reference to “yesterday” is apparently to April 19, since Congress did not meet on April 20, a Sunday.

<sup>2</sup> There is no mention at all of this order in the journals. The issue of Congress’ reaction to the dispute between New York and Vermont—the so-called New Hampshire Grants—is discussed in William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, April 7, 1777, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:279–80. Duer was a member of this committee.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:268–69.

## Mann Page to John Page

Dear Brother

Philadelphia, April 21st. 1777

In your Letter you mention that you seldom hear from your Friends in Congress. The Fault I assure you lays with the Post, for since my Recovery from the Small Pox I have wrote regularly to you, & during that

time Colo. Lee frequently wrote to you. We are now threatened with a Visit from the Enemy, which has been the Case for some time; they have now nine Men of War in the Bay, & are making Preparations at N. York & Amboy, which most of our Generals think are intended against Philadelphia. I beleive they are too weak to succeed, but if they do, I am of Opinion they will ruin their Army, which is at this time very small, & is mouldering away by Sickness. We are too weak to take Advantage of their Situation. Ten thousand Men at this time would go near to finish the War. If the different Legislative & Executive Powers upon the Continent will inforce the late Resolutions of Congress, we may yet be free; we may collect a respectable Army, & upon that depends our Salvation as a People. Britain begins to totter, her Trade is cut off, & her Merchants become Bankrupt. Several considerable Houses have failed, which have drawn many others into the Ruin. We learn from St. Eustatia that two of the American Privateers have taken nine transports & two Guineamen, part of which have arrived safe at Martinique.<sup>1</sup> There are several Persons in Prison here for corresponding with & inviting the Enemy to come here; I beleive they are only the Tools of considerable Villains, whom I hope may yet be discovered. As soon as I have time I will wait upon Doctr. Rittenhouse & desire him to answer your Letters, but God knows when that will be, for we attend Congress from ten to four, & meet in Committee at six. I am glad to hear Mann is so well fixed, give my Love to him, to my Sister & the other little ones. I am, dear Brother, yours affectionately,

Mann Page Junr.

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> For the identity of these privateers and Robert Morris' involvement with them, see Morris to William Bingham, April 25, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Philadelphia Ap. 22. 1777

The Post brought me two Letters from you, this Morning, one of the 7th instant, and one before.

You seem to be in fine Spirits—I rejoice at it.

General Gates has commanded in Philadelphia, untill about a Fortnight ago, he went to Ticonderoga, where he is to command all Summer.

Schuyler is here, where he now commands. We are crouding along Soldiers to the General, as fast as they get well of Inoculation.

I think our N. Englandmen have been rather tardy, but I hope soon to hear of the Arrival of their Men at Morristown. The Army there, and at Ticonderoga too, is too weak.



But Howes Army is weak too. Let the Tories, and Cowardly Whiggs, exaggerate, as much as they will, How has not in all America, Ten Thousand Men fit for Duty, nor in my Opinion Seven.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:219.

## Richard Henry Lee to Patrick Henry

My dear Sir,

Philadelphia 22d. April 1777

The inclosed resolve is now sent principally with a view of rectifying some Typographic errors that the copy formerly sent you contained. I am again, in the name of Congress, to desire your Excellency will detain the flower in Virginia until further directions, that Mr. Commissary Trumbul had sent Vessels from the eastward to remove.<sup>1</sup> The reason you assign, of danger from the enemies Cruisers, is conclusive with Congress for staying this provision a while.

Since I wrote you last, few occurrences have happened worth noticing. Skirmishes often happen, in which we generally succeed. The enemy with 4000 men & 4 Gen. Officers surprised our post at Bound Brook and carried off a few prisoners with 2 pieces of Cannon. But they quickly retired and not without loss. To revenge this insult, Gen. Stephen attacked one of their picket guards and drove it in, killing 7 and making 16 prisoners. It seems to be the opinion of all men that 10, or 12000 men in the Jerseys might quickly decide the fate of our enemies before reenforcements arrived to them. The Eastern Troops are all to undergo inoculation before they join the Army. Our Southern Troops that have arrived here ill all recovered & recovering from the Small pox having had the distemper very favourably, & as far as I have heard, without loss. We have accounts just now that 2 of our Privateers have taken and sent into Statia and Martinique nine sail of Transports on their way to N. York—and two Guinea Men bound to the West Indies. These transports were to call at the West Indies for rum for the Army & to avoid as much as possible the Eastern Privateers.

Deserters come out in numbers and say the enemies Army is very sickly and that the Men dye fast.

I am, with great esteem, dear Sir, your most affectionate & obedient.

Richard Henry Lee

RC (PPAmP).

<sup>1</sup> On May 20, Congress authorized Deputy Commissary General William Aylett to decide when these vessels, which he had loaded with flour for the army, should sail. *JCC*, 7:208–9, 373. Concerning this subject, see also Aylett's letters to President Hancock, dated April 11, 13, 18, and May 9, 13, in *PCC*, item 78, fols. 69–86.

## Mann Page to George Weedon

My dear Sir

Philadelphia April 22d. 1777

I am much obliged to you for your several Letters, which remain a Debt unpaid, owing to various Causes; first to Mrs. Page's Illness having detained me three Weeks on the Road, & really for Want of Time by the last Post. I thank you for them & will in Return give you all the News which we have here. The Enemy have for some time threatened this City & have made Preparations which induce our best Generals to think their principal Attack will be against this Place. On Sunday the 13th nine of their Men of War came into this Bay, which confirmed in great Measure the Information we had before received. Some Days before that Congress had ordered a Camp to be formed under Genl. Schuyler upon the West Side of Delaware for these Reasons. That the Soldiers, of whom there were a considerable Number in the City, might be drawn together so as to be ready to oppose any sudden Attempt upon the City 'til the main Army could come up; that they would be more healthy in Camp than in Town; that they would support the Militia which might come in; that they would be able to reach the North River, if the Attack of the Enemy should be made there, before the rest of the Army could cross; & that they could speedily join the General to execute any Plan which he form in the Jersey. After all they were left to the General's Direction to order where he pleased. He in Part approves of the Measure, & has ordered the Camp to be formed at Bristol where all the troops that come from the Southward stop. The Design of Men of War at present seems to be to obstruct the trade of this Place. Preparations are making to receive them, so that if they succeed, I am of Opinion they will ruin their Army which is mouldering away by Sickness. Nothing has happened lately except a small Affair on Monday the 14th in which Genl. Steven surprized their Picquet, killed 7, & made 16 Prisoners. I am obliged to go to Congress, therefore must reserve the rest of my Letter for next Week. Give my Compts. to Mrs. Weedon, Mrs. Mercer & Mrs. Gordon. I am dear Sir, Your affectionate Friend,

Mann Page Junr.

P.S. A Surgeon from the general Hospital is gone down to Dumfries to inoculate the Southern Troops,<sup>1</sup> therefore you had better not engage any other Doctor; Their Charges are too high, & are disapproved of.

M.P. jr.

RC (PPAmP).

<sup>1</sup> This postscript was probably written on the 23rd, for it was then that Congress authorized James Tilton to go to Dumfries, Va., to supervise the inoculation of Continental troops. *JCC*, 7:292.

## Philip Schuyler to George Washington

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 22d. 1777.

I am this Moment honored with your Excellency's Favor of Yesterday's Date.<sup>1</sup>

Your Excellency's Letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> to Congress,<sup>2</sup> was Yesterday, as I am informed, read and referred to the Board of War. I shall apply for a Copy of it, and try to execute whatever you may have wished should be done.

I have with some Difficulty cleared this City of the Troops and got them all at Bristol except about sixty, who arrived last Night and who will proceed as soon as they are cloathed.<sup>3</sup>

On Saturday I sent one of my Aids de Camp to procure a Return, which was very imperfectly made, Copy whereof your Excellency has inclosed. I hope for a more perfect one to Day, having sent one of the Light Horse Yesterday with a Letter to the commanding officer, for that purpose, to whom I shall immediately write to make you the most exact Returns.

The Fortifications at Fort Island and Red Bank are going on as expeditiously as can be expected, with only four hundred and fifty Men of the provincials of this State. I am Dr Sir with great Respect, Your Excellency's most obedient hble Servant,

Ph. Schuyler

RC (DLC). In the hand of John Lansing, Jr., and signed by Schuyler.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:446.

<sup>2</sup> In reality Schuyler is referring to Washington's April 18 letter to President Hancock, which was received on the 20<sup>th</sup>. See Hancock to Washington, April 20, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:289.

## Charles Thomson to George Washington

Sir

April 22 1777.

Before I joined Congress after their adjournment from Baltimore, the following resolutions passed in Congress 14 March 1777.<sup>1</sup>

"That the pay list transmitted by the general for the establishment of Colonel Sheldon's regiment of cavalry be approved of.

"That the list of officers & privates transmitted by the general as necessary to compose every regiment of Cavalry to be raised for the defense of these united states be approved of."

No copy was taken of these papers and the president informs me he sent back the originals to you. As the journals will be incompleat without

those papers I must beg the favour of you to send me the originals & I will transmit you a certified copy.

I am, Sr, Your obedient humble Servt,

Chas Thomson

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> For the delay in Thomson's resumption of his secretarial duties after the adjournment from Baltimore, and the manner in which the journals were maintained during the interval before his return to Philadelphia, see John Hancock to the New York Delegates, March 11, 1777, note.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 23. 77

My Barber has just left the Chamber. The following curious Dialogue was the Amusement, during the gay Moments of Shaving.

Well, Burn, what is the Lye of the day? Sir, Mr. <sup>1</sup> just told me, that a Privateer from Baltimore, has taken two valuable Prizes, with Sixteen Guns each. I can scarcely believe it. Have you heard of the Success of the Rattlesnake of Philadelphia, and the Sturdy Beggar of Maryland, Mr. Burn? These two Privateers have taken Eleven Prizes, and sent them into the West India Islands, Nine Transports and two Guinea Men. Confound the ill Luck, sir, I was going to sea myself on board the Rattlesnake and my Wife fell a yelping. These Wives are queer Things. I told her I wondered she had no more Ambition. Now, says I, when you walk the Street, and any Body asks who that is? The Answer is "*Burn the Barbers Wife*." Should you not be better pleased to hear it said "That is *Captain Burns Lady*, the Captain of Marines on board the Rattlesnake"?

Oh! says she, I had rather be called Burn the Barbers Wife, than Captain Burns Widow. I dont desire to live better, than you maintain me, my dear.

So it is, Sir, by this sweet, honey Language I am choused out of my Prizes, and must go on, with my Soap and Razors and Pinchers and Combs. I wish she had more Ambition.

If this Letter should be intercepted by the Tories, they will get a Booty. Let them enjoy it. If some of ther Wives had been as tender and discreet, as the Barbers, their Husbands Ambition would not have led them into so many Salt Ponds. . . .<sup>2</sup> What an Ignis fatuus this Ambition is! How few of either Sex, have arrived at Mrs. Burns pitch of Moderation, and are able to say, I dont desire to live better: and had rather be the Barbers Wife than the Captains Widow. Quite smart I think as well as Philosophical.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2: 219-20.

<sup>1</sup> Blank in MS.

<sup>2</sup> Suspension points in MS.



## Samuel Adams to Samuel Cooper

My dear Sir

Philada. April 23d. 1777 <sup>1</sup>

I take this earliest opportunity to acknowledge your Favor of the 26th of March.<sup>2</sup> Your letters are always very acceptable to me; I wish therefore that your Leisure would admit of your writing oftener.

I heartily concur with you in regretting the abominable Practice of prophane Swearing in our Army. It is indeed alarming. Congress has repeatedly enjoined the General officers to discountenance this Practice by their Authority and Influence. You know my Abhorrence of it, and may depend upon my exerting the utmost of my Endeavors if possible, to root it out of the Army.

We have been, and still are threatned with the Invasion of this City. I confess I have no great Apprehensions of it, for I very much question whether the Enemy are yet in a Condition to open the Campaign.<sup>3</sup> It is mortifying in the Extreme that a small Handfull of ragged, discontented, unpaid Mercenaries should be sufferd to remain so long in Jersey & Rhode Island. But this must be attributed to the unlucky Circumstances of our Troops having been inlisted for one year only. The Advantage which the Enemy have taken from this Mistake will I hope be prevented by a permanent Army for the future. Experience has shewn us past Errors, and we are endeavoring to correct them. The medical Department is now put upon a new footing, and Rules are establishing in the Quarter Masters for keeping our Soldiers clearly in their encampments whereby their Health as well as Lives will be preservd. The Expediency of inoculating our new raisd Troops, has retarded their March to the Places of their Destination; but we are daily getting through this Difficulty, and I am in good Hopes that we shall bring our Army into the Field, though later than was intended, in tollerable Season. A well appointed army will put it in the Power of our generals to take a more decisive Part. We must drive our Enemies into the Sea and be ready to attack them on that Element. I earnestly wish to see such an enterprizing Spirit as shall confound our Enemies, and give Assurances to the Friends of Liberty, that we still retain a just Sense of the Dignity of our Cause, and are resolved by Gods assistance to maintain it at all Hazzards. A Resolution passd in Congress lately recommending to the New England States to raise their Militia & dislodge the Enemy at Rhode Island. I hope this will be done. Shall we not once more see that Spirit which animated our Countrymen at Lexington & Bunkers Hill.

You have Intelligence from Europe as early as we have it here. I rejoyce with you in the Arrival of the Amphitrite with Cannon & Stores from France. Our Friend A L in a Letter dated at Bordeaux the 20th of Feby says that "ten thousand German & three thousand British Troops are to sail from England for Boston early in the Spring."<sup>4</sup> I have always been of opinion that New England would again be the Seat of the

War, and I have in my Letters to my Friends thro' the Winter past been endeavouring to impress this opinion upon their Minds. I am utterly at a Loss to what Cause to impute the Failure of the Eastern States to send forward a Reinforcement of Militia to Ticonderoga when it was so pressingly urged upon them by Congress early in the Winter. I am ready to attribute it to any thing rather than a Want of Zeal & Vigor, but It is humiliating to have it suspected to be the Fact, and it troubles me beyond Measure to find honest men disposd to give Credit to what unprincipled Tories are industriously propagating here that publick Virtue and the military Spirit is totally lost in New England and that People have given themselves up to Luxury and Avarice. I hope it is not the Voice of every Citizen *Quærendo Pecunia primum est*. If it be not the general Doctrine, I pray you my dear Sir to give me your Assurances to the Contrary.

Congress a few Days ago determind to establish a Marine board in the Eastern Department to consist of three Members who are to reside in or near Boston with the Power of adjourning to any other place. They are to be subject to the Directions of the Marine Committee of Congress. I hope this Board will facilitate our Naval Affairs and put them upon a more respectable Footing.<sup>5</sup> This Day General Warren, Mr Vernon Late of Newport & Mr Deshon of New London were elected to this Board with a Salary of 1500 Dollars per Annum each. A Number of Gentlemen of the Massachusetts had been nominated by the Members of that State; Mr C——<sup>6</sup> was nominated by Mr Duane of New York & As the gentlemen of Connecticut and Rhode Island were urgent, it would not have been prudent for us to have been strenuous for the Choice of all out of our own State, though I am inclin'd to think there might have been a better Choice. Mr Warrens Character has long been revered in Congress. Mr. C had been personally known to many of the Members, Mr Deshon to no one. The two last had an equal Number of Votes but neither of them a competent Number. On a second Tryal Mr Deshon obtaind the Election.

I heartily concur with you in regretting<sup>7</sup>

FC (NN).

<sup>1</sup> Although this draft is dated April 23, the last paragraph could not have been completed before May 6, the day Congress appointed the members of the Navy Board at Boston. See *JCC*, 7:331.

<sup>2</sup> This is probably a reference to Cooper's March 24 letter to Adams, which is in the Adams Papers, NN.

<sup>3</sup> In the FC the letter to this point was crossed out.

<sup>4</sup> Not found, but see Arthur Lee's February 18 letter to the Committee of Secret Correspondence in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:272–73.

<sup>5</sup> The remainder of this paragraph was crossed out in the FC.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Cushing, former Massachusetts delegate.

<sup>7</sup> The FC ends here abruptly at mid-page.

## John Hancock to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Sir, Philada. April 23d. 1777.

The Congress, in Consequence of Information of the extraordinary Behaviour of Mr. Franklyn who has been for some Time a Prisoner at large in your State, have come to the enclosed Resolve relative to him; by which you will perceive they judge it highly necessary that he should be put under close Confinement. I am therefore to request you will give Orders for having the Resolve carried into Execution as soon as possible agreeably to the Terms of it.<sup>1</sup>

I am likewise to request your Attention to the other Resolve<sup>2</sup> transmitted herewith, & your Compliance with the same. I have the Honour to be, with great Respect, Sir, your most obed & very hble Serv,

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A).

<sup>1</sup> After his deposition by the revolutionary party in June 1776, William Franklin, the last royal governor of New Jersey, was sent to Connecticut under liberal terms of confinement. There he violated his parole by "dispersing" copies of the pardons offered by the Howe brothers to rebellious Americans, prompting Congress on April 22 to request Governor Trumbull to place him in "close confinement, prohibiting to him the use of pen, ink, and paper, or the access of any person or persons, but such as are properly licensed for that purpose by Governor Trumbull." Trumbull carried out Congress' wishes, and Franklin remained confined until he was exchanged for Gov. John McKinly of Delaware in October 1778. See *JCC*, 7:291; Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:317, 344, 450, 476; Burnett, *Letters*, 2:362n.4; and Larry R. Gerlach, *William Franklin: New Jersey's Last Royal Governor* (Trenton: New Jersey Historical Commission, 1975), pp. 32-35.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly the resolve of April 22 asking the states to send Congress "their statute laws . . . the additions that may be made thereto . . . [and] all discoveries and improvements in the arts of war made in such States." *JCC* 7:291.

## Marine Committee to Elisha Hinman

Sir April 23d 1777

We expect by the time that these Orders will get to your hands, the Ship Alfred under your Command will be compleatly fitted and manned, You are therefore to proceed with said ship immediately to sea, and there Cruize in such Latitudes as will be most likely to fall in with, and intercept the enemies Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or supply their Army at New York, and you are to use your true endeavours to take, burn, sink or destroy as many of the enemies Vessels of every kind, as it may be your good fortune to fall in with.

The Prizes you may be lucky enough to take you will send into such Ports of the United States as you shall think will be the safest and most Convenient. It is our desire that you shall return to Boston or some safe

port contiguous thereto by the 20th of June or first day of July next. You will therefore regulate your Cruize so as to be [*in*] port by that time when we will have fresh Orders for you Lodged with John Bradford Esqr. at Boston to whom you are to apply or send for the same immediately after your Arrival. These Instructions will demand immediate execution, therefore you will hold your ship in readiness and keep your Crew together for that purpose. It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he use his officers and people well still preserving strict discipline and decorum—that Prisoners be treated with humanity and that great care be taken of the ships, their materials and stores, all which we desire you will carefully observe and advise us of your proceedings by every opportunity. We expect your most dilligent exertions will be used to execute these orders with all possible dispatch and in the best manner for the service of your Country. Wishing you health and success we remain Sir, Your very hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

## Marine Committee to John Peck Rathbun

Sir, In Marine Committee. Philadelphia April 23. 1777

As we have appointed you to the Command of the Sloop Providence of War, now at Providence in the State of Rhode Island, we expect your good conduct in this Station will be equal to the trust reposed in you, and that by a dilligent attention to your duty, every thing possible will be done for the benefit of your Country, which will recommend you to the esteem and future favours of this Committee.<sup>1</sup>

We now think proper to give you the following instructions which you are to Obey.

You are to loose no time in proceeding to join your Vessel at Rhode Island, where you must exert yourself to have her fitted and Manned immediately. When ready for the sea, you are to proceed on a Cruize in such Lattitudes as will be most likely to fall in with, and intercept the Enemies Transport Vessels coming to reinforce or Supply their Army at New York; and you are to use your true endeavor to take, Burn, Sink. or destroy as many of the Enemies vessels of every kind as it may be your good fortune to fall in with.

The prizes you may be lucky enough to take you will send into such ports of the United States as you Shall think will be safest and most convenient. You are to continue this Cruize for two Months when you are to put into the most convenient Safe Port and apply to the Continental agent there, with whom it is probable we will lodge fresh instructions for you, but should that not be the case, you are to victual your Sloop for an other Cruize of the Same Space as the present, and imme-



diately proceed to Sea again taking these instructions for your plan and conforming to them Strictly. When your provisions are expended return again into some safe port in these States, advise us of your arrival and we will give you fresh orders.<sup>2</sup>

You will loose no Opportunity to give us an Account of your proceedings and we depend much on your Vigilance and care in executing these orders.

It is expected from every Commander in our Navy that he use his Officers and People well, Still preserving Strict discipline and decorum, that prisoners be treated with humanity, and that great care be taken of the Ships their materials and Stores, all which we desire you will carefully observe.

Wishing you health and Success we remain, Sir, Your Most obed servts.

John Hancock	Wm. Whipple
Robt Morris	Oliver Wolcott
Richard Henry Lee	Thos Burke
Nathan Brownson	William Ellery

P.S. Inclosed you have Signals whereby to know American Vessels of War.

RC (TxU). In a clerical hand and signed by Brownson, Burke, Ellery, Hancock, Lee, Morris, Whipple, and Wolcott.

<sup>1</sup>Congress had approved Rathbun's appointment on April 19. *JCC*, 7:284.

<sup>2</sup>Rathbun's personal background and subsequent cruise are described in William J. Morgan, *Captains to the Northward: The New England Captains in the Continental Navy* (Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishing Co., Inc., 1959), pp. 80-82.

## Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings

April 23d. 1777

Come. met. Present Messrs. Morris, Lee, Whipple, Lewis. Order on the Audr. genl. in favr. Oswell Eve, for 652 24/90 dlls being the amount of his Acct for manufacturg. powdr. to the 10th April last. Order in favor of S & J. Penrose for 5600 dlls being the amount of the valuation of their ship Sally, taken by the Enemy sd. ship being charterd & ensurd by the Come. In favr of Hodges & Bayard & Co. for 10,000 dlls, in part paymt. of their Accts agt. the Come. In favor of Ths. Grant owner of the Brige. Friendship for 235 1/3 dlls, being balance of his acct. for demurage in sd. vessel. Do. to Do. for 1750 dlls being the valuation of his Brige. Seaflower charterd & ensurd by the Come. sd. Brige. being taken by the Enemy at New-York, as appears by an Affidavit of said Grants taken before Jams. Young Esqr., 16 inst. Agreed that Mr. Morris direct the several agents

for purchasg. tobo. that they must not exceed 25/ per [Cwt?] for that Art.

MS (MH-H).

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Honored Sir

Philadelphia April 23d. 1777

We received Your Honrs. Letter of the 16th Instant by Mr Brown. Your Letter to Congress was also received & read yesterday, & referred to the Committee for Foreign affairs.<sup>1</sup> Nothing very remarkable has occurred here Since my last—Nor any later advices received from France. The recruiting Service makes but slow progress in this State the Battalions not half full, in Virginia about two thirds of their Number are inlisted. In the Carolinas I hear their Numbers are near compleated, but many are prevented by the Small pox from Joyning the army. Congress was not disposed to censure the Eastern States for giving Additional Bounties, Supposing them to be the best Judges of the expediency of the Measure. The Committees of the Middle States did nothing as to regulating prices, they being equally divided in opinion respecting the matter. The prices of almost all kinds of Articles are very high here. The Commissary General arrived here Yesterday and a Committee is appointed to confer with him & consider what further regulations ought to be made in his department. The Journals of Congress are not yet published further than to the first of last May. A new Printer is Employed to bring them up to this time from the tenth of May 1775. I furnished Your Honr. with the Journals from September to the last of December 1775, last Fall. I now Send the proceedings from the first of January to the last of April 1776;<sup>2</sup> the printer will compleat the rest as fast as possible. I have Sent Several of the late papers which contain Some resolutions of Congress, and particularly the regulation of the Hospital. Making Cannon is an object that deserves attention, as Several of the Frigates are detained only for want of Guns. Those made at Salisbury are allowed to be of the best kind, and tho' they are higher by the Ton than those made here, yet I have heard it observed they are not dearer on the whole, being much lighter. I hope the two Delegates Your Honr. Mentions will attend Congress by the first of May, as I want to return home. I am Sorry there is occasion to call the Militia to Joyn the army. I think it would be unnecessary if the Men inlisted were collected together. What is recommended respecting Rhode-Island, it was hoped, would not detain the Militia for a very long time after their assembling. I am glad to hear of the Success of the Brigg Defence. I will take the first opportunity to transmit to your Honr Copies of all Petitions of the Several States heretofore made to the King, that I can obtain. Congress has resolved to appoint three Commissioners to reside in or near Bos-

ton with power to adjourn to any other part of New England to Superintend the Building, fitting out and manning the Ships of War ordered to be Built there, & to provide Naval magazines & generally to direct the Naval affairs in New England Subject to the Orders of the Marine Committee.<sup>3</sup> A recommendation passed Yesterday to the Several States to furnish Congress with their Laws, and to Send them to each of the other States that they may be acquainted with each others Laws—also to communicate any new discoveries they may make in the art of War or other useful Arts.<sup>4</sup> By a letter from General Heath to the Board of War it appears that the most of the Powder made in the Massachusetts Bay is bad and not to be depended on, & that they have a large Quantity of it. I hope the Inspectors of Powder in Connecticut will take Sufficient care that what is manufactured there is good, as the Safety of the State depends on its being Good. The price of Board is increased here about one third, & horsekeeping double. There must be a large quantity of paper money in circulation while the war lasts. I wish a spirited Effort might Soon be made to Subdue the Enemy's force now in the Country. General Wolcott is in a good State of Health. He Saw Your Honrs. Letter and desired me to Write to your Honr. what was needful, but as we had nothing very important to write thought it unnecessary for both to Subscribe the Letter.

I am with Great Esteem & Regards, Your Honor's Obedient humble  
 Servant,

Roger Sherman

RC (Ct).

<sup>1</sup> Trumbull's April 14 letter to President Hancock is in PCC, item 66, fols. 321–22. On April 17 the former Committee of Secret Correspondence had become the Committee for Foreign Affairs, and Thomas Paine had been elected its secretary. See *JCC*, 7:274.

<sup>2</sup> In September 1776 Robert Aitkin had been authorized to reprint the journals from May 1775, and he offered the January to May 1776 portion for sale in October 1776. *JCC*, 5:829, 6:1128.

<sup>3</sup> See *JCC*, 7:281, 331.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:291.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir

Philadelphia 23d Apl 1777

Your two favors one of 26th March & the other 5th *March* which I suppose shod be *April* came to hand Yesterday.<sup>1</sup> I find You have hard work to Perswade gentn to serve their Country, what can be the meaning of this? Do Gentn still think it Hazardous to appear in a Charecter that will render them obnoxious to the British Tyrant & his infernal Tools? or are they afraid their Private interest will suffer? The day Perhaps is not far off when some of those Gentn. who now are so loath to step forth, will be making interest for a seat in Congress, they may be gratified for

what I care, and let those who are now Laboring in the vineyard, enjoy the Blessings of Domestic Happiness, with the Pleasing Reflections that will result from a Consciousness of having lent their aid when their Country most wanted it. However, it seems you have at least found two Gentn who will come, & I wish they may set out as soon as possible.<sup>2</sup> Col. Thornton intends to leave this place in about ten days & I wish to follow him before the weather is too warm.

The last accot. from Our Commissioners was under the 6th Feby. They then had not heard of our successes in Jersey but I imagine our dispatches must have reachd them soon after. The accots then circulating all over Europe were such as were most agreeable to the British Court and really staggered some of Our Friends but notwithstanding this our Commisrs. had established a Bank in France, & one of them had set out for Spain. Another was to go in a short time for Holland. There did not appear to be the least probability of Britains geting any assistance from Russia. The most they expected to reinforce their Army in America with is 10,000 but the Court of France say they can not send near that number. There is every appearance of a General war in Europe & it is my opinion that Hostilities are commenc'd by this time. The Opposition to the Measures of administration in England increases, which will help to Confound their Councils. We daily Expect to have more particular accots. Our Commisrs. say they did not chuse to write so perticularly by Merchant ships as there had been some instances of carelessness in masters that had been taken who sufferd the letters to fall into the Enemies hands.

Our army is daily increasing and by the accot received by Spies & deserters that of the Enemy is daily weakening so that I think our prospects are tolerably good. I shall write you more fully in a few days. In the meantime beg leave to assure you that I am very

Sincerely Yours,

Wm. Whipple

RC (NhD).

<sup>1</sup> These letters, under the dates March 5? and 26, 1777, are in the microfilm edition of Josiah Bartlett Papers, NhHi.

<sup>2</sup> Nathaniel Folsom and George Frost were elected delegates to Congress on April 1, but Frost did not attend until May 16 and Folsom until July 21, 1777. See *N.H. State Papers*, 8:528; and *JCC*, 7:365, 8:568.

## Oliver Wolcott to Samuel Lyman

Sir,

Philadelphia 23d April 1777

Your Favour of the 3d and 9t inst is recd. in the Latter of which came inclosed a Letter from Rhina. I perceive the little Child has had the Small Pox bad. But blessed be God that she has recovered from it. I perceive that Mrs. Wolcotts Health has been for a long time low, I fear more so than I am informed of. I wish to know how she is more explicitly than I



have hitherto done, for tho' I mean to Return Home as soon as I can yet that may not probably be till I may have the Return of another Letter from you in Case you can put it into the Post Office, the most sure as well as expeditious mode of Conveyance.

Govr Trumbull has mentioned in sundry of his Letters that Two Gentlemen would soon attend Congress. In his last he says they may be expected in May. Perhaps some Variation is expected in Regard to the circumstances of this City, tho' I do not myself think that the Enemy will Endeavour to come here. Nothing Material which bears any respect to this Circumstance has occurred since my last to you of the 15<sup>t</sup> inst. My long Absence from my Family and my hearing that Mrs. Wolcott does not enjoy Health inclines me to Return as soon as I can suppose the publick Service and Expectation will Admit. I see the justice of your Remarks on some of our People. It is certainly the most proper time for the Devil to be the Most Busy when he can do the Most Mischeif. As Contingencys may happen so that I may be able to Return sooner than I now expect, I would advise you and my Freinds not to Write to Me any Thing which may be attended with any ill Effects if their Letters should fall into the Hands of any one.

Our Accounts from abroad are in general that it is not probable that G. Britain will be able to send over any large Number of Troops for this Campaign. The Appearance of a Rupture in Europe encreases. The Opposition in G. Britain is loud, the Administration inflexible—my own Apprehension is that the British Warfare in future will be carryed on rather in the Way of distressing us, than by Conquest. New Methods to delude in hopes to divide will probably be invented. And they will rather hope to succeed in their Veiws, by harrassing and specious Pretences than by an Expectation that their Armys will be irresistible. But I hope God will preserve us as well from their Machinations as the Power of their Arms. I Wish you would Write to me as soon as you can in Regard to the Wellfare of my Family. I am sir, Your Most Obedient, humble Servant,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (MeHi). Addressed: "Saml Lyman Esqr—at Litchfield."

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 23d April 1777

I have recd a Letter from Rhina inclosed in one from Mr. Lyman, by which I perceive that your Health is still low. I hope you attend to the Recovery of it as much as you can, the Distress which you underwent during the Sickness of the Family must have been great and it becomes us to be thankful that God has carryed you and the Family thro the Disorder. Rhina Says you are using Cordials for your Cough, by which

I suppose it is tho't that it is Occasioned by a Translation of the Rhu-matic Disorder to the Breast or Lungs. I wish that you might have the Opinion of some able Physician upon your Case. Riding might be of Service to you. But whatever you find conducive to your Health I hope you attend to—And may God grant you his Protection and Blessing. It has been for a long time Said that Two Gentlemen would soon Attend as Deligates, but none yet come, tho We are Still told the same Thing. As soon as any one Arrives I shall return Home.<sup>1</sup> I shall unless something uncommon prevents undoubtedly Return next Month, but not perhaps till the later part of it. But you will hear from me again Shortly. I Wrote Rhina a Letter the 15t<sup>2</sup> so that I shall not Write to her till the next Oppertunity. As to the Articles which she mentions I shall attend to them. Every Thing here bears a Price which is extremely high. Linnens of the Coarsest kind which used to be sold for 2/6 or 3/ cannot now be had under 15/ or 20/ per yard and every other Article Much in the Same Proportion. You will let me know whether you would have me Buy any Linnens on a Family Acco. I am well enough supplied on my own particular Acco. without having had any Occasion to purchase. The Other Articles I shall purchase, and this if you advise to it. Nothing Material has occurred here since my last. Many imagine that Genl. Howe will again Attempt to come to this City. But it is not my Expectation. I think in his present Circumstances he will not Risque an Expedition of this Nature. The Letter from Rhina is Very Acceptable. My Love to my Children and Friends. May the Almighty Bless you and give you Health. My own Health is as good as usual.

I am yours with the sincerest Regard & Affections,

Oliver Wolcott

P.S. I Inclose to you a List of Letters which I have sent you since the first of Janry. which have not all been Acknowledged. You will by this see wheither you have recd. all of them.

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> In a brief letter to Laura of April 15, Wolcott had reported: "By the blessing of God I enjoy health. I intend to set out from here to see my family within the month of May. But you will hear farther from me." Wolcott Papers, CtHi.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## William Ellery to Nicholas Cooke

Sir,

Philadelphia April 24th 1777.

Since my last Congress received a Letter from Gl. Washington, which contained some Things that respect our State.<sup>1</sup> I therefore made some Minutes and Extracts therefrom, and now inclose them to you; and two or three of the latest News Papers.

The Extract about an Attack on Rhode-Island is a Sort of an Answer to the Resolves of Congress relative to that necessary Business. The Advertisement I consider as a Puff.<sup>2</sup> If the Enemy had counterfeited Congress Notes, and meant to circulate them they would hardly have advertised it. Genl. Washington views it as an unparelled Peice of Artifice. I submit to his better Judgment. However as he had been informed that a Person had gone from York to Rhode-Island with a Quantity of counterfeit Money, it can't be amiss to look out.

I wish that the Recommendation of Congress may be attended to and animate our and its neighbouring States; so that such a Body of Men may be collected for an Attack on Rhode-Island as may excuse Us from the Imputation of Listlessness or Cowardice.

It is thought that the Enemy intend to attack this City, if they should they may be defeated. Besides the Disadvantage to Commerce which attends their getting and holding Possession of our Sea-Ports, our Ships of War by being blocked up in our Rivers are rendred useless, and We loose Reputation in foreign States. I hope that the State of Rhode Island will exert itself on this Occasion and gather Laurels. We have nothing new. Mr. Marchant is not arrived. I shall expect to be informed as early as possible after the Choice of a Delegate. I have been long from my Family, & know not how they are situated. If I should be rechosen the Assembly will I doubt not grant me Liberty to return for a Time. Govr. Hopkins will I hope come forward and supply my Place; for it is still my Opinion that our State should always have at least Two Delegates in Congress. The Advantages resulting herefrom would more than compensate the Expenche. Heartily wishing for the Recovery of Rhode-Island, the Happiness and Prosperity of the State I have the Honor to represent in Congress, and for the Health & Felicity of its Governor I continue to be with great Respect, Your Honor's most obedient, humble Servant,  
Wm Ellery

RC (RHi).

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:436.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 434–35.

## Francis Lewis to Philip Livingston

Sir

Phila. 24th April 1777.

By a letter I received from Solomon Simson of Norwalk I am informed that a Jonathan Pinkham who commanded one of the United Whaleing Company's Vessells which Vessell together with her Cargo of Oil &c he sold in the West Indies that brought the proceeds with him to New York and said he could not find any of the concerned, there to pay it to, therefore took it with him to Nantucket.

As you are President of that Company I must request that you would empower the Honbl John Hancock Esquire or his substitute to receive from said Jonathan Pinkham the money belonging to the said Company for their use.

I am, Sr., your very Humble Servt,

Fras Lewis

RC (NHi). Addressed: "The Honbl Phil Livingston Esqr Present."

## Philip Schuyler to George Washington

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 24h. 1777. ten O'Clock A.M.

At nine this Morning I was honored with your Favor of Yesterday's Date.<sup>1</sup>

On the 22d Instant Congress resolved that all the Troops in this State should immediately be moved to New Jersey,<sup>2</sup> I accordingly ordered that they should march next Morning by the Way of Trentown to Prince Town, and from thence to Morris Town, by such a Rout as General Putnam or the commanding officer at Prince Town should direct. I hope they marched Yesterday and shall by this Conveyance send Copy of your Orders to General Putnam, that the Troops may be disposed of agreeable thereto.

I have had Colonel Wood with me, but the Account he gives of the State of his Regiment is so confused that I can make Nothing of it. I have therefore ordered him to make a Return with explanatory Notes, but I fear I shall not get in Time to inclose in this Letter.

Congress have appointed a Committee of Ways and Means for reinforcing you, who will also point out some Mode by which the Militia of this State may be drawn out.<sup>3</sup>

Inclosure your Excellency a Return made by Lieutenant Gurney whom I sent to Maryland to hasten on the Troops. Most of the Effectives mentioned in it are already passed this and are included in Colonel Spotswood's Return.

I shall not fail to send on the Troops as fast as they arrive and can get their Cloathing the want of which some Times detains them. I am Dr Sir with every Sentiment of Respect, Your Excellency's most obedient, humble Servant,

Ph. Schuyler

RC (DLC). In the hand of John Lansing, Jr., and signed by Schuyler.

<sup>1</sup> See Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:453-54. This day Schuyler also wrote a brief letter to Gen. Israel Putnam, the commanding officer at Princeton, in which he enclosed an extract of this letter from Washington and stated that "The Troops alluded to in it are already marched and have my orders to repair to Prince Town." Schuyler Papers, NN.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:289.

<sup>3</sup> After its appointment on April 23, this committee submitted reports to Congress on the 24th and 25th. See *JCC*, 7:294, 296, 299-300.



Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings

April 24. 1777

The Comme. met. Present, Morris, Lee, Whipple, Lewis. Letters from Danl. Tillinghast Esqr. of the 15 & 18 March inclosing Invoices, of Goods purchasd for the use of the Army, & cloathing supplied the fleet was read. Orderd that he be directed to apply to the Cloathier general for the amount of the goods purchasd for the use of the Army & that he charge the cloathg. furnishd to the Marine Come. & transmit the receipts of the Papers to whom they were delivrd. A Lettr from Ths. Mumford Esqr. dated March 22 was read. Agreed that if the Owners of the Schooner Polly (wch he advises is arrivd at Plymouth with a Cargo of Salt) will not agree to receive her at that place, that he be orderd to load her again on public acct. with a suitable Cargo for Eustachia addressg. her to his friends there, orderg. them to ballast her with Salt, ship what powdr. remains with them & dispatch her back for the first safe port in these States. Mr. Barnabas Deane's letter of the 24th March was read. Agreed that he be directed to pay Capt. Biglow, the freight of the dry goods agreeable to the list enclosd in his letter, & 2/ per Bushl. for Salt, wch. if he refuses to take he will refer him for settlemt. of the whole to this Come.

Come. met. Present, Morris, Lee, Whipple. The Come. have purchasd from Mr. B. Gibbs of this city Mercht. his Brige. calld the Ann, Garrick master, as she now lays at Cape Francois, in the island of Hispaniola for the sum of £1800 cury. he to pay the portage bill, & all charges to the time She deliverd her cargo there. The Come. have likewise agreed with sd. Gibbs for a bill wch. he is now to give, on M. Stephen Ceronio Merchant there for the balance of the nett proceeds of sd. Briges cargo for wch. he is to be pd. 100 per Cent advance. The Come. have likewise agreed with Saml. Penrose & Co. of this City for the purchase of their Sloop, calld the Phebe, as she now lies at Cape Francois for £1000 this cury., they to pay all charges until the time She deliverd her cargo there. Also for a Bill wch sd. Penrose & Co. are to draw on Mr. Stephen Ceronio for balance of proceeds of sd. sloops cargo for wch. the Come. are to pay one hund. per Cent. Mr. Morris producd the follg. Bills drawn upon him as Chairman of the Come. by J. Weriat Esqr. Continental Agent in Georgia<sup>1</sup> vizt In favor of Burney & Dawson dated 14 Decr. last for this cury

£1696. 10. 0

In favor of Levi Shiftall	31st Jany-----	75.
Do	1 Feby-----	75.
Do	3 Feby-----	75.
Do	4 Feby-----	75.

Pensyla. Cury. £1996. 10

Orderd that Mr. Morris pay sd Bills. Order on the Auditor genl. in favor of J. Brown in behalf of Mr. Morris, for 5324 dills to pay sd. bills to be chargd sd. J. Wereat Esqr. in the Come's books.

MS (MH-H).

<sup>1</sup> The following note in the copyist's hand appears at the foot of the page and is keyed at this point: "In this manner Mr. Morris might have paid for all his private purchases out of the public Treasury, wch. would not appear 'till the Agents settled their Accts. This Wereatt, like many others never settled & so the public money is accounted for. A. Lee." For examples of similar comments pertaining to Robert Morris' transactions found in this copy of the committee's "journal," see Secret Committee Minutes of Proceedings, August 8, 1776, note 2, and May 1, 1777, note.

## Oliver Wolcott to Joshua Huntington

Sir,

Philadelphia 24th April 1777

Your Favour of the 14t [inst.] is recd. but have not had time to lay it before the Committee. Shall take the earliest Oppertunity for that Purpose after which you may expect to hear from me again. Iron I perceive is a most extraordinary Price, and I beleive it will be difficult if possible to obtain it here, and indeed the British Frigates lying at the Capes would prevent the exportation if it could be purchased. It is proper you should have what money is necessary, but that cannot be sent to you at this Time, tho' I beleive it will not be difficult to procure it for you soon.<sup>1</sup>

You will probably be soon put to less difculty on many Accounts as Congress have determined to establish a Marine Board for the N England Governments—a most necessary Institution, and which has been much Wanted. This Day probably the Commissioners will be appointed.<sup>2</sup> You may depend upon my Readiness to give you every Assistance in my Power. I am, sir your most Obedient, humble Servant, Oliver Wolcott

RC (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> Huntington was superintending the construction of a Continental frigate. See Wolcott to Huntington, March 11, 1777, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> See John Adams' first April 6 letter to James Warren, note 2.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. April 25th. 1777.

You will perceive, from the Resolves which I have now the Honour of transmitting, the Measures the Congress have come into on a Variety of Subjects.<sup>1</sup> I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them.

Altho Congress have recommended to the executive Authority of this State to call out three Thousand of the Militia, and to order the City

Militia to hold themselves in Readiness at a Moments Warning, yet such is the Weakness of the Government, that every Means should be used to give Efficacy to this Requisition. They have therefore determined to detain Genl. Mifflin in this City for some Time knowing his Popularity and Influence to be very great, provided you should be of opinion, the Service will admit of his Absence from the Army.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, with the utmost Respect & Esteem, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presid.

[P.S.] Your Letters of the 21 & 23d have been duly rec'd.<sup>3</sup>

As I propose in a few days to Send my Family off for Boston, I Take the freedom to Request that you will be so Obliging as to give me your Opinion which Rout would be the safest for them to Take; & what part of the North River you Judge best for them to Cross at. I am, your most Obedt,

John Hancock

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> In addition to those mentioned in the next paragraph, Hancock also sent Washington resolves of April 23 and 25 on reinforcements, prisoner support, medical pay, Gov. William Franklin, Maj. Elisha Painter, and hospital inspection. *JCC*, 7:289–91, 298–300.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:296.

<sup>3</sup> These letters are in *PCC*, item 152, 4:91–92, 95; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:449, 462.

## Robert Morris to William Bingham

Dear Sir

Philada. April 25th. 1777

I am indebted for your favours of the 25th Jany, 19th & 22d Feby. & 12 & 13th March to which shall reply. My Scruples about Privateering are all done away. I have seen such Rapine, Plunder & Destruction denounced against & executed on the Americans that I join you in thinking it a Duty to oppose and distress so Merciless an Ennemy in every Shape we can. Therefore it matters not who knows my Concern with Ord as I am now ready to encrease the Number of my Engagements in that Way. I suppose we are entitled to one fifth of Mr. Prejents Share in the first Prize Capt. Ord took on his way from St. Eustatia to Martinico as well as those he took after your Agreement the whole of which will help to pay for & fit out the Brig. on which I observe you had got an Abatement. I have lately had the Pleasure to hear that Ord in Company with the Rattle Snake had taken & sent into Martinico Nine Sail of transport Ships, two Guinea Men & two Sail of Transports into St. Eustatia. If this be true & it seems well authenticated we shall make a fine hand of it. I hope soon to have the Account Confirmed by you & to hear of further Success.<sup>1</sup> You will see by

a letter of this date from W, M & Co[mpan]y<sup>2</sup> how much they want your Assistance to relieve poor Charles Willing from an Unlucky Embarrassment he is involved in by the Ill Conduct of their Correspondants & as I am lead to believe that Ord has lodged & will lodge considerable Funds with you on my Account I request you will Apply the whole or any part thereof that may be necessary to their Use in discharging their Debt to Mr. Charles Willing for Amount whereof you will transmit me your draft on them & I am not without hopes that you may be able to pay the whole debt with my said funds. However that hope shall not prevent me from providing others untill it is Accomplished with Certainty. I was long aware that you would be pinched for remittances on Publick Acct. but things were so circumstanced it was impossible to avoid it. I hope however that the Arrival of the Independance, the Hornet & the Lewis may have relieved you as their Cargoes were of Considerable Value & you have not been called upon to make any fresh Embarkations on Acct. of the Continent.

I intend writing you very fully soon but at present I am tired & dont know by what Conveyance this is to go. I ever remain with great regard  
Dr. Sir, Your Obedt hble Servt. Robt Morris  
(Copy)

FC (DLC). In a clerical hand and signed by Morris.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of the privateering ventures that Morris and Bingham had an interest in at this time, see Robert C. Alberts, *The Golden Voyage: The Life and Times of William Bingham, 1752-1804* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1969), pp. 50-52.

<sup>2</sup> Morris also wrote Bingham a long business letter this date on behalf of his firm Willing, Morris & Co., which is in the Bingham Papers, DLC.

## Robert Morris to Philip Schuyler

Dear Sir

Philada. April 25th 1777

My Neighbour Mr. John Bringhurst is thrown into a Scene of trouble which I wish to extricate him from & hope to do it through Your means. His Servant Mathias Christman has been enlisted yesterday or this morning by a Recruiting Party belonging to Capt James Lang of the Pennsylvania Battn. at present commanded by Lieutt. Colo. Hubley and unless he is immediately discharged Mr. Bringhurst's Family will be much distressed, as both the Master & Mistress of the Family a[re . . .] and very helpless on that Account [. . .] every thing to them & the [. . .] parable. I hope therefore my application will not be deemed improper, as it is prompted by Humanity and supported by Justice, for in Fact the recruiting party have no right to take him untill a Law is passed by the Legislature, however I will only add that by ordering an immediate dis-



charge of this Boy You will confer an obligation on sir, Your most Obedt  
servt.  
Robt Morris

RC (NN).

## Secret Committee to Caesar Rodney

Sir, Philadelphia April 25. 1777 <sup>1</sup>

By a letter lately received from Mr Purdy at Lewis Town we learn that he has been pretty Successfull in collecting the goods that were Saved from the Ship Success lately blown up at the Capes; and that he was waiting for the Waggons which you were so obliging as to promise to Send down for the purpose of bringing up those goods.<sup>2</sup> We doubt not these waggons are gone forward and must beg leave to trouble you further with this business. We request you will inform yourself of the Situation of the Enemys Ships of war in the Bay, and Should you find that those goods can be Safely transported by water from your Place or from Rheedy Island; that you will have them put onboard some Craft at either of the places, and sent up here as expeditiously as possible. Should this mode be dangerous, you will please to order the waggons to proceed up to this city.

We know your Zeal for the publick Interest will excuse the liberty we take in giving you this trouble, and if at any time we can render you services in return you may command us freely being Sir with much respect, Yr. very hble Servants,

Robt Morris

Richard Henry Lee

Wm. Whipple

RC (PHi). In a clerical hand and signed by Lee, Morris, and Whipple.

<sup>1</sup> This letter was not dispatched until several days later, as Morris added the committee's May 2 letter to Rodney on the verso.

<sup>2</sup> The committee had requested Rodney's assistance in its April 15 letter to him.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Saturday Evening 26 April 1777

I have been lately more remiss, than usual in Writing to you. There has been a great Dearth of News. Nothing from England, nothing from France, Spain, or any other Part of Europe, nothing from the West Indies. Nothing from Howe, and his Banditti, nothing from General Washington.

There are various Conjectures that Lord How is dead, sick, or gone to England, as the Proclamations run in the Name of Will. Howe only, and nobody from New York can tell any Thing of his Lordship.

I am wearied out, with Expectations that the Massachusetts Troops would have arrived, e'er now, at Head Quarters. Do our People intend to leave the Continent in the Lurch? Do they mean to submit? or what Fatality attends them? With the noblest Prize in View, that ever Mortals contended for, and with the fairest Prospect of obtaining it upon easy Terms, The People of the Massachusetts Bay, are dead.

Does our State intend to send only half, or a third of their Quota? Do they wish to see another, crippled, disastrous and disgracefull Campaign for Want of an Army? I am more sick and more ashamed of my own Countrymen, than ever I was before. The Spleen, the Vapours, the Dismals, the Horrors, seem to have seized our whole State.

More Wrath than Terror, has seized me. I am very mad. The gloomy Cowardice of the Times, is intollerable in N. England.

Indeed I feel not a little out of Humour, from Indisposition of Body. You know, I cannot pass a Spring, or fall, without an ill Turn—and I have had one these four or five Weeks—a Cold, as usual. Warm Weather, and a little Exercise, with a little Medicine, I suppose will cure me as usual. I am not confined, but moap about and drudge as usual, like a Gally Slave. I am a Fool if ever there was one to be such a Slave. I wont be much longer. I will be more free, in some World or other.

Is it not intollerable, that the opening Spring, which I should enjoy with my Wife and Children upon my little Farm, should pass away, and laugh at me, for labouring, Day after Day, and Month after Month, in a Conclave, Where neither Taste, nor Fancy, nor Reason, nor Passion, nor Appetite can be gratified?

Posterity! You will never know, how much it cost the present Generation, to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make a good Use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:223–24.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir,

Philada. April 26th. 1777.

Since I had the Honour of addressing you yesterday, the Congress have come to the enclosed Resolves, to which I beg Leave to refer your Attention.

General Schuyler, in Pursuance of the Orders of Congress, has dispatched Officers to forward the Troops to Head Quarters; and I am to request you will send some General Officer into the Eastern States, to

hasten on the Troops already raised, to their respective Places of Destination.<sup>1</sup>

If the enclosed Resolves for calling out a Part of the Jersey & Delaware Militia,<sup>2</sup> together with the former Resolves for calling out the Militia of this City, can be happily carried into Execution, I make no Doubt your Army will be sufficiently reinforced to answer our most sanguine Wishes, and to baffle every Attempt of the Enemy. I have the Honour to be with every Sentiment of Esteem, Sir, your most obed. and very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:300.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:299–300.

## Marine Committee to Nicholas Biddle

Sir

April 26th 1777

Your letter of the 14th instant is the only one we have received since the misfortune of carrying away your masts or indeed since you left the Capes of Delaware so that we are strangers to the cause and manner of that unfortunate accident, if you wrote us any previous Letter it never reached our hands. We observe with infinite concern that your people have been and remain Sickly—this has happened in so many of our Ships that we cannot help attributing it to some cause that may with proper care & attention be removed. You should therefore insist that your officers do frequently see the Ship thoroughly and perfectly cleansed, aloft and below from Stem to Stern, burn Powder and wash with vinigar betwixt Decks—order Hammocks, all bedding, bed Cloths and Body Cloaths daily into the quarters or to be aired on Deck, make the people keep their persons cleanly and use exercise—give them as frequent changes of wholesome food as you can, Fish when you can get it and fresh food in Port. Ventilate the Hold and between Decks constantly. In short cleanliness, exercise, fresh air and wholesome food will restore or preserve health more than medicine and it is deserving the utmost attention of any or every officer to preserve the Health & Spirits of the men. If he does not do it he never can make a figure but performing this there is nothing he may not accomplish be his ambition ever so great. We expect the Randolph will be fitted and ready for Sea by the time that this reaches you, and it is sent by Express that it may not arrive too late, you are then to follow these Instructions, as we hereby revoke those given you by Mr. Morris on our behalf.<sup>1</sup> You are to receive from the Continental Agents at Charles Town, any quantity of Casks or Packages of Merchandize that they may have to ship on the public account and take them on board the Randolph. It is not meant by this that they will ship

more than you can conveniently take in, or so much as to make the ship deep, or in any degree interfere with the duty or business of a Ship of war. Perhaps 50, 60 or 70 Casks of Indico may be the extent, and at the same time that we avoid as much as possible incommoding the ship, we recommend accommodating the Public service all in your power. It is absolutely necessary that we make immediate Remittances to our Agent at Cape François in the Island of Hispaniola as his Credit is nearly ruined there for want of them, and ours has greatly suffered by having three Vessels laded here intended for his relief blocked up by the enemy a long time & no likelihood of their getting away. You will therefore consult with the Agents and receive from them as much of the goods as they have to Ship as you possibly can without injuring the fighting or Sailing of the Ship. It is not only necessary to make these Remittances but to make them speedily, and therefore we expect your utmost endeavours will be used to get away with the goods immediately.

The Agents will be ordered to Load one or more Vessels if possible and send along with you to the Cape; you are to receive them under your Convoy and give them proper Signals and Sailing orders and then proceed with them direct for the said Port of Cape François using your utmost endeavours to keep Company and carry them safe into that Port where you will apply to Mr Stephen Ceronio our Agent, whom you will probably find in a good deal of distress which your safe arrival will relieve him from. To this Gentleman you are to deliver the goods shipped by the Agents at Carolina and to him the other Ships will be consigned. He will procure for you any necessarys wanted there and will attend you in a Vissit to the Governor, Intendent and proper officers of whom you will ask the liberty and protection of the Port and pay the proper Compliments on behalf of the States you serve. We have advice that the American Trade to and from Hispaniola is nearly destroyed by the Cruizers from Jamaica consisting of two Frigates, Two Brigantines, Two 14 Gun Sloops and 4 or 5 small schooners and it will be a work of great merit to take and destroy such of these plunderers as your force will enable you to Cope with; and that we judge may be either of the Frigates separately, or all the others in any Shape. Going with your Convoy and goods on board it will be prudent to avoid large Vessels, but when you have delivered the goods at the Cape, we desire you may not loose an Hours Time in that Port, take in any fresh provisions or stores you want and immediately go out on a Cruize against these enemies of our Peace, Happiness and Prosperity. The Randolph by all accounts comes to our ears has the Heels of most ships that swim—therefore if the Frigates Cruize together you can avoid them, if you meet either single we hope you can & will take them but particularly exert your utmost diligence and endeavours, to take, sink or destroy all the small Cruizers of our enemies that infest that Coast, and after driveing them from the Cape go down to the Mole St. Nicholas and clear that Coast of them as America has



much valuable Commerce there. Any American Traders that may be ready to sail when you leave these Ports convoy them safe off, and meeting any bound in you will contribute what you can to their safety. Mr. John Dupuy at the Mole will supply you with what may be wanting there. The Ship or two Ships that go under your Convoy from Carolina, as also a Brigantine Anne, Captain Garrigues, and Sloop Phœbe, Captain Gilbert, will have to sail from thence to America soon after your arrival there wherefore you will fix with Mr. Ceronio the time when they will [*be*] ready to depart and return from your first Cruize at that time on purpose to Convoy them out and off that Coast as they will have stores on board for the Continental service. You will procure at every Port you go into and from every Prize you make as many Seamen as possible to enter our service. We hope you will have the good fortune to take many Prizes & amongst them a Number of those Cruizers that have been fitted out against us. You may send your Prizes into the Cape or Mole consigned to Mr Ceronio, or Mr Dupuy, who will make sale of them to the best advantage if permitted by the Government there as is done in other French Ports both in Europe and the West Indies; or you may send them to the Continent to the first safe Port they can make. But should you take any fast sailing Vessel with Guns and Stores suitable and can spare officers and men for her you may employ one or more such as Tenders to Cruize in Concert with you, giving the Commanding officer a Copy of your Commission and suitable Instructions; and we hope by this means you will be able not only to Clear Hispaniola of Cruizers but also to retaliate the injuries they have done us, on the Trade of Jamaica; and for this purpose you should get Mr. Dupuy or some other Person to employ a proper person in Jamaica or to send one on purpose to send up accounts regularly to the Mole of the Times when single ships or fleets are ready to sail and the Convoys intended to guard them. Such intelligence will be very useful to you on many accounts and on every occasion. You may employ the Randolph in the manner already pointed out to the 10th of July next, when you are [*to*] open the Sealed Instructions inclosed herein<sup>2</sup> and as those Instructions require from you an other Service you must keep your ship in as good Order and as well manned as possible and in every respect fit for Action at that period or as much so as the Circumstances of your Cruize will permit. Should it be necessary we imagine you might heave down or give the ship a Parliament Heel at the Cape or Mole. Any Prisoners that you take who will not enter into our Service you may Exchange at Jamaica for Americans taken in Armed Vessels and held as Prisoners there, sending down a flag from the Mole for that purpose if you think it necessary or if convenient you may send or bring them to the Continent always treating them with humanity. We wish to hear of strict discipline being introduced in our Navy, at the same time we recommend kind usage and great care of the Crews. You

must attend to the Printed Instructions of the Navy Board and with the best wishes for your success, We remain Sir, Your very hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> See Marine Committee to Biddle, February 15, 1777, which was written at Philadel[ph]ia when Robert Morris was the only committee member there.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

## Marine Committee to Livinus Clarkson and John Dorsius

Gentlemen <sup>1</sup>

April 26th. 1777

Your Letter of the 14th instant arrived yesterday and is the only one we have received from you respecting the Randolph Frigate altho it is a considerable Time since we heard of her putting into your Port dismasted. From what you write she will be fitted and ready for the sea by the Time this reaches [you], and it is sent by Express that the orders may arrive in Time.

We very chearfully express our approbation of your Conduct in employing the Schooner Lewis, Captain Stevens, to assist in taking up the anchor and cable you mention, as well as in making a purchase of the Schooner Betsey to continue that service and shall acquiese in such reasonable reward as you may think a proper recompence for the services of Mr. Richard [Hurn?] in this business, never doubting but you will have due regard to the Interest of our Infant Country, which will have to struggle with a heavy debt after the present contest is ended. It is the duty of every individual to take what care they can for the States but more particularly it is the duty of all Public officers, and we are persuaded your Conduct will bear the proper Marks of CEconomy. Under this perswasion we desire the continuance of your endeavours to save what can be saved of the Anchors, Cables, Guns or Stores of that Fleet which suffered such distress in their Attack on fort Moultrie as forced them to leave these things behind them. As the increasing of our Navy will be a constant object it will be necessary to purchase suitable Materials and Stores whenever they can be met with in these States. The Actions<sup>2</sup> Anchor will no doubt come into use before long and you will please to purchase it on the lowest terms in your power; the price of the best Anchors made here before the price of Labour was raised by our inlistments was 6½d this Currency per lb. but an Anchor suitable for the Public service and obtained as a prise should not be held in proportion to the general state of enormous Prices that too much prevail through the Continent at this time. You must purchase this and such other Materials and stores suitable for the Navy as you meet with

them, as cheap as possible. The Experiments<sup>3</sup> Cable had best be unlaid and as you propose made up into small Rigging, we mean that of 40 fathom. The whole Cable may remain as well as the Anchors until we order them for the use of some of the ships now building. The Other Anchors and Cables not delivered to Captain Biddle may remain for the same purpose & when you have finished the business of taking them up, you'll send us a return of all that remains after the Randolph is gone.

We shall order you to be Credited for the amount of the supplies to the Schooner Lewis, Sloop Hornet and Ship Randolph in due time and you will furnish the Accounts and vouchers for those supplies. We understand there are some of the Actions Guns that have been saved by the State of South Carolina, we wish to purchase them as we find some difficulty in getting Guns cast fast enough. These Guns are not so suitable for the Land as for the sea service and we hope the State will part with them. If they agree give us immediate notice that we send for them, but should they refuse to sell they will probably exchange. We are told the Guns are 9 Pounders and it may be in our power to procure 9 Pounders of the long sort which are fitter for fortification. If any of those ships Guns still remain in the water you will no doubt use your utmost endeavours to have them taken up & we flatter ourselves that success will attend you. The Service Captain Biddle is now Ordered upon being urgent and the objects in view important, we request your utmost exertions to get him out to sea as soon after the receipt of this Letter as it possibly can be done. With much esteem we remain Gentn, Your hble servants

P.S. As Mr. Clarkson wishes to leave Carolina for a few Months, we can have no objection as you will take care that the public bussiness does not suffer thereby. You'll mention to Mr. Ceronio the articles he had best to ballast the returning Ships with.

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Clarkson and Dorsius were Continental prize agents at Charleston, S.C.

<sup>2</sup> H.M.S. *Actaeon*—the vessel to which reference is presumably being made—had run aground and burned during the unsuccessful British assault on Sullivan's Island in June 1776. See Morgan, *Naval Documents*, 5:797–801, 905.

<sup>3</sup> H.M.S. *Experiment*, though not captured, had been heavily damaged during the battle of Sullivan's Island. *Ibid.*, pp. 801, 804, 806, 927, 1001, 1003, 1160.

## Philip Schuyler to the Albany Committee

Dr Sir

Philadelphia April 26t. 1777

I am honored with your Favor of the 16t Instant covering the Account of Wheat, in part of the County of Albany, for both of which please to accept my best Thanks.

I am sorry to hear that such dangerous Designs are carrying on by internal Enemies.

Eight Days ago a Committee was appointed to inquire into my Conduct, but Nothing has as yet been done. Inclose you Copy of some Resolutions of Congress that were passed before my arrival here. By these you will readily perceive that I shall not return a General. Under what Influence it has been brought about, I am not at Liberty now to mention.<sup>1</sup> On my Return to Albany I shall give the Committee the fullest Information. I am &c.

Ph. Schuyler

LB (NN).

<sup>1</sup> See Schuyler's Memorial to Congress, May 6, 1777.

### Philip Schuyler to Richard Varick

Dear Colonel:

Philad. April 26th. 1777.

. . . .<sup>1</sup> Yesterday the Committee to enquire into my conduct began that Business.<sup>2</sup> I believe they will finish in the course of the week and that their report will be agreeable to my wishes; and such a change has taken place in the sentiments of the members who were unacquainted with me, that it is thought they will expunge the resolutions of the 15th of March,<sup>3</sup> copy whereof you have enclosed, but they have a much more difficult point to get over. They wish me to remain in the command, but having already appointed, (or at least implicatively so) Gen. Gates to the command of the Northern department,<sup>4</sup> they do not know how to manage the matter. They wish to make Ticonderoga a separate command; that they have a right to do, but they know that I will not serve at Albany on those conditions. Indeed, not on any unless an absolute command is giving [given] me over every part of the army in the Northern department. This they will not do, and therefore I shall return Mr. Schuyler only to Albany.

Adieu and believe me most sincerely Dr. Sir yours etc.

Ph. Schuyler

MS not found; reprinted from Burnett, *Letters*, 2:341-42.

<sup>1</sup> Ellipsis in Tr.

<sup>2</sup> This committee, consisting of one delegate from each state, had been appointed on April 18. *JCC*, 7:279-80.

<sup>3</sup> See John Hancock to Schuyler, March 18, 1777, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> Schuyler construed Congress' March 25 order to Horatio Gates "to repair to Ticonderoga, and take command of the army there" as evidence that the delegates intended Gates to command the whole northern military department. *JCC*, 7:202. That this was indeed the intention of some delegates is evident from John Hancock's March 25 letter to Gates.



## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 27. 1777

Your Favours of Ap. 2 and Ap. 7. I have received. \*

The inclosed Evening Post, will give you, some Idea, of the Humanity of the present Race of Brittons.<sup>1</sup> My Barber, whom I quote as often as ever I did any Authority, says "he has read Histories of Cruelty; and he has read Romances of Cruelty: But the Cruelty of the British exceeds all that he ever read."

For my own Part, I think We cannot dwell too much, on this Part of their Character, and Conduct. It is full of important Lessons. If the Facts only were known, in the Utmost Simplicity of Narration, they would strike every pious, and humane Bosom, in Great Britain with Horror. . . .<sup>2</sup> Every Conscience in that Country is not callous nor every Heart hardened.

The plainest Relation of Facts, would interest the Sympathy, and Compassion of all Europe in our Favour. And it would convince every American that a Nation, so great a Part of which is thus deeply depraved, can never be again trusted with Power over Us.

I think that not only History should perform her Office, but Painting, Sculpture, Statuary, (*Medalling?*) and Poetry ought to assist in publishing to the World, and perpetuating to Posterity, the horrid deeds of our Enemies. It will shew the Persecution, We suffer, in defence of our Rights—it will shew the Fortitude, Patience, Perseverance and Magnanimity of Americans, in as strong a Light, as the Barbarity and Impiety of Britons, in this persecuting War. Surely, Impiety consists, in destroying with such hellish Barbarity, the rational Works of the Deity, as much as in blaspheming and defying his Majesty.

If there is a moral Law: if there is a divine Law—and that there is every intelligent Creature is conscious—to trample on these Laws, to hold them in Contempt and Defiance; is the highest Exertion of Wickedness, and Impiety, that Mortals can be guilty of. The Author of human Nature, who gave it its Rights, will not see it ruined, and suffer its destroyers to escape with Impunity. Divine Vengeance will sometime or other, overtake the Alberts, the Phillips, and Georges—the Alvas, the Grislers and Howes, and vindicate the Wrongs of oppressed human Nature.

I think that Medals in Gold, Silver and Copper ought to be struck in Commemoration of the shocking Cruelties, the brutal Barbarities and the diabolical Impieties of this War, and these should be contrasted with the Kindness, Tenderness, Humanity and Philanthropy, which have marked the Conduct of Americans towards their Prisoners.

It is remarkable, that the Officers and Soldiers of our Enemies, are so totally depraved, so compleatly destitute of the Sentiments of Philanthropy in their own Hearts, that they cannot believe that such delicate Feelings

can exist in any other, and therefore have constantly ascribed that Milk and Honey with which We have treated them to Fear, Cowardice, and conscious Weakness. But in this they are mistaken, and will discover their Mistake too late to answer any good Purpose for them.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:224–26.

<sup>1</sup> *The Pennsylvania Evening Post*, April 24, 26, 29, and May 3, 1777, contained in serial form the report of a committee of Congress appointed on January 16 “to enquire into the conduct of the British and Hessian generals and officers.” See Samuel Chase to the New Jersey Council, January 23, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> Suspension points in MS.

## John Adams to Samuel Freeman

Sir

Philadelphia Ap. 27. 1777

Your Favour of 25 March I duely recd.<sup>1</sup> The Plan of riding you mention, between Boston and Falmouth, appears to me, reasonable enough, but the Committee will not incline to take upon themselves, Regulations of that kind of which they cannot be so good Judges, at this Distance as the Post Masters who are nearer. My Advice would be for Mr Hastings, Mr Libby and yourself, to confer upon this Subject with each other, in Person or by Letter and, any Representation of this Matter to the Post Master General, Mr Bache, in which you three can agree will no doubt be readily adopted.

Mr Hastings's Memorial has been considered, and the Post Master General has been impowered to make an addition to his allowance, not exceeding two hundred Dollars a year which I hope will do him Justice.

I wish it was in my Power to send you the Constitutions of the several States, but it is not. They are not to be had here. I wish you Success, equal to your Desires, in establishing an happy Form of Government. But the Rage of Speculation and the Flames of Passion have spread so far, in our State, that I am not without my Fears that you will be too much divided in Sentiment to erect a very vigorous Government. Our State abounds with ambitious Men, in such Numbers, and with avaritious ones, who are still worse, and with others in whom both Passions unite, in a great degree, who are the most dangerous of all, that I fear our Government, will be turbulent, our Laws unstable, and consequently our Exertions too languid.<sup>2</sup>

Time however, may correct Extravagances, and make our Posterity happy, but I much fear that our Happiness of the present Age must consist chiefly in the Contemplation of theirs.

You and I however, I hope shall have the Consolation of reflecting that We have done our Utmost, upon the purest Principles of Philanthropy, to promote the Happiness of the present as well as future ages.

I find it difficult to get an opportunity of sending the Journals of Congress, such of them as are printed. But will embrace the first I can find.

I hope that our State will compleat its Complement of Men, to a single soldier. This Campaign will be the most interesting, and I have Strong Hopes, will be the last that will be attended with much Hazard or Difficulty. At least the Stronger We are this year, the more likely it will be to put a Period to the War. I am, sir, with much Respect, your most obedient sert,

John Adams

RC (MeHi).

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Freeman (1743–1831), a Falmouth (Cumberland Co.), Mass., merchant, served in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, 1775–79. Shipton, *Harvard Graduates*, 8:578–79; and L. Kinvin Wroth et al. eds., *Province in Rebellion: A Documentary History of the Founding of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1774–1775*, 4 vols. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 4:2856. His March 25 letter to Adams is in the Adams Papers, MHi.

<sup>2</sup> The Massachusetts General Court resolved itself into a constitutional convention on June 17, 1777, and promptly delegated its powers to prepare a constitution to a committee. The committee draft was accepted by the convention on February 28, 1778, but it was sharply rejected by the state's voters. See Stephen E. Patterson, *Political Parties in Revolutionary Massachusetts* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1973), pp. 153–96.

## John Adams to William Tudor

Philadelphia April 27. 1777

Aha! Exchanging the Pride, Pomp and Circumstance of Glorious War, for the soft charms of Wedlock and domestic Felicity, I Suppose—abandoning Gun, Drum, Trumpet, Blunderbuss and Thunder, for the less terrible Sounds of the Wranglers at the Bar.

Well! Young Folk must have their Way. But I suppose by that Time you have laid the Foundations of a Young Tudor or two, you will be on Fire again with military Ardor, and get into the Army.

You must find the Pleasures of Books, and the City active and violent enough for your Nerves so long Stretched with the Grand and sublime Events of War.

I believe it lies with the Agent to employ whom he will in filing Libells. But I have been so long out of the scene that I know nothing about it. There will be soon a Navy Board in Boston, and then it will lie with them. Who the Men will be I know not. Men of Business and Integrity I hope. It would give me Pleasure to give you Business, if in my Power, but I dont know how. I am &c,

John Adams

RC (MHi).

## John Adams to Unknown

Philadelphia April 27th. 1777 Sunday.<sup>1</sup>

I think it is Montesquieu, who Somewhere observes, that the English of Charles's days were perpetually bewildered in their Pursuit of a Republic, for being themselves extremely corrupt, they Sought in vain for that pure and disinterested Principle upon which, alone, a Commonwealth can Stand.

The Principle of Republican Government, is as little understood in America as its Spirit is felt. Ambition in a Republic, is a great Virtue, for it is nothing more than a Desire to Serve the Public, to promote the Happiness of the People, to increase the Wealth, the Grandeur, and Prosperity of the Community. Thus, Ambition is but another Name for public Virtue, and public Spirit. But the Ambition which has Power for its object, which desires to increase the Wealth, the Grandeur, and the Glory of an Individual, at the Expense of the Community, is a very heinous Vice.

What Shall We Say of Oliver Cromwell? What Shall We Say of others, his Coadjutors? Can we Say, that they were actuated by a Love of the Public? Were they not governed by Selfish Motives? I make no Scruple to confess that I think Oliver totally destitute of the Republican Principle of public Virtue. He thought himself honest and sincere. So did Balaam, when he asked Leave to curse Israel. There never was a greater self deceiver than Oliver Cromwell. The Man after Gods own Heart, to whom Nathan Said Thou art the Man, deceived himself in the Same manner. How sincere was he, when he felt such honest Indignation against the Man who had taken his poor Neighbours Lamb.

We, in America, are so contaminated with the Selfish Principles of Monarchy, and with that bastard, corrupted Honour, that Monarchy inspires that we have no Idea, no Conception, no Imagination, no Dream, of the Passions and Principles which Support Republics. What will become of Us? God knows.

The Commissary General, this Evening related me an Anecdote which gave me great Spirit as it seems an Evidence that Integrity was not lost out of the world.

He Said that in comparing his accounts he missed Seventy Pounds, and puzzled himself a long Time, to no Purpose to discover where it could be gone. For several Months he had given it up as lost and unaccountable. At last Coll Cary of Bridgewater (*of whose military Abilities, I had no opinion*) came to him and told him that after he went home from Cambridge where he had commanded a Regiment of Militia, he paid off every Bill and had Seventy Pounds left. He recollected that he had recd no Money but from the Commissary General, and therefore that he must have recd too much. This accounted for the Commissarys Loss. Here was Integrity. If all Americans were Carys, we should be fit



for a Republic. But, how many Carys have We? I am afraid to say how few I think we have.

LB (MHi).

<sup>1</sup> The recipient of this letter has not been identified, but Adams made this note in his letterbook. "April 27. wrote ten Letters to G. Green, G. Knox, S. Freeman Esq., Dr Cooper, J. Hastings, Dr Foster, Mr Tudor, G. Warren and two to Portia. These will go by Captn. Thompson or by next Wednesdays Post. They are as well worth copying as any others, but I am weary of the Employment."

## Philip Schuyler to the Board of Treasury

Gentlemen

Philadelphia April 27<sup>th</sup>. 1777.

As the Committee to enquire into my Conduct meets this Evening, I shall be much obliged to the Board of Treasury if my Accounts could be reported upon to Day. As the Calumny with Respect to the Detention of the Specie designed for Canada has been so general I wish the Board to be as particular on that Head as possible, and if it appears that I sent any Money to Canada before I received any public Money: if it appears that there was a Ballance due to me when the Army had retired from Canada; if it appears, that, with Respect to Specie I am still in Advance, I wish, if it can be consistently done, that those should be specified, and if in the Expenditure of public Monies in general it appears to you that I have paid due attention to Economy, I wish it to be noted.<sup>1</sup> I have the Honor to be &c.

Ph. Schuyler

LB (NN).

<sup>1</sup> On May 3 Congress approved a report of the Board of Treasury stating that during his tenure in the northern department Schuyler had personally advanced to the army \$3,250 in specie more than he had received from Congress. Ten days later it accepted another report in which the Board stated that it had examined and approved the general's accounts, thereby contradicting rumors that he had misused public funds. *JCC*, 7:326-27, 349-50.

## William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett

My Dear Sir,

Philadelphia 27<sup>th</sup> Apl 1777

Since my last which I think was of the 23 inst I have not had the Pleasure of any of Yours, nor has any thing material hapened this way. Our army is still small but increasing daily, & I flatter myself the Enemy will not long be able to hold their Posts in New-Jersey, but which way they will bend their Course it is very Difficult to determine, those who have expected them this way, are now giving up that opinion & suppose they will persue their first Grand object, however, time only can discover their real intentions.

The States are all represented, & Congress goes on tolerably well, The Confederation is at last taken up, & two day in a week assigned for that Business.<sup>1</sup> Col. Thornton intend seting out in a few days, I leave you judge what my scituation will then be, as I shall then be obliged to attend some Committees that he is now on, besides, the business of two Committees that I am now on, is daily increasing. I therefore hope You will take my case into Your serious consideration, that such relief may be afforded me, as is consistant with the Public good, to which I must allow, that every Private consideration ought to give place.

You tell me in Your last that two Gentn were Elected, & I am informd by some of my Friends that one of them has declin'd, I hope his place will be immediately filled, & if they are not set off before this reaches you I beg they may, immediately after, at this Critical juncture it is absolutely necessary that the state shod be represented, I therefore shall Tarry till relieved, but shall grow very impatient in 3 or 4 weeks.<sup>2</sup>

I suppose by this time there is not a remaining doubt but America will support her independency, is it not time therefore to pay some attention to the means of protection, from future invasions? This from our scituation must be done by a Powerfull Navy which must be furnish'd by the Eastern States where all the materials may be procured if proper means are use'd, what I have particularly in view is Hemp, & Iron, the former is as profitable an article to the farmer as any thing he can raise, the latter may also be supplied with great profit to the undertaker, but as there are but few people who have stocks sufficient to make large experiments & who are at the same time Bless'd with a proper Spirit for such undertakings I am fearful nothing will be done, unless the Legislature shod encourage it, which I think it wod be well worth their while, at least to consider of, if you think this hint worth notice you will, no doubt, make a proper use of it. I am, with great Respect, Your affecte Friend & Huml Sert,

Wm. Whipple

RC (NhD).

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:240.

<sup>2</sup> See Whipple to Bartlett, April 23, 1777, note 2.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 28. 1777

There is a Clock Calm, at this Time, in the political and military Hemispheres. The Surface is smooth and the Air serene. Not a Breath, nor a Wave. No News, nor Noise.

Nothing would promote our Cause more, than Howes March to this Town. Nothing quickens and determines People so much, as a little

Smart. The Germans, who are numerous and wealthy in this state and who have very imperfect Ideas of Freedom, have a violent Attachment to Property. They are passionate and vindictive, in a Degree that is scarce credible to Persons who are unacquainted with them, and the least Injury to their Property, excites a Resentment beyond Description. A few Houses and Plantations plundered, as many would be, if Howe should come here, would set them all on Fire. Nothing would unite and determine Pensilvania so effectually.

The Passions of Men must cooperate with their Reason in the Prosecution of a War. The public may be clearly convinced that a War is just, and yet, untill their Passions are excited, will carry it languidly on. The Prejudices, the Anger, the Hatred of the English, against the French, contributes greatly to their Valour and Success. The British Court and their Officers have studied to excite the same Passions in the Breasts of their Soldiers against the Americans, well knowing their powerfull Effect.

We, on the Contrary, have treated their Characters with too much Tenderness. The Howes, their Officers and Soldiers too, ought to be held up to the Contempt, Derision, Hatred and Abhorrence of the Populace in every State, and of the common Soldiers in every Army. It would give me no Pain, to see them burn'd or hang'd in Effigy in every Town and Village.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:227.

## John Adams to Unknown

Dear Sir.

Philadelphia April 28. 1777.

We are now very near the Month of May, and the Enemy are in the Midst of Us. They have an Army in Canada, another in Rhode Island, another in New York and the Jersies, which will enable them to take the Field, much earlier than they did last year.

Where is our Army to oppose them? General Washington has but a small one with him. At Ticonderoga, by Letters received this day from General Waine who commands there, We have not a Thousand Men.

We have been continually flattered, with assurances that many Men were inlisted and marched and marching to Ti and to Morristown. But none of them or next to none arrive. What Purpose can it answer to deceive Us? If the Massachusetts is exhausted, if it is discouraged, if it neither can nor will afford its Quota of Troops, in the Name of Truth and Candor let Us know it.

The Lassitude of that State has a most pernicious Effect upon all others. Our Weakness in every Quarter, encourages the Tories every where, induces Numbers to fly to How and inlist with him. It has a dismal gloomy

Effect upon the Whiggs. It is transmitted to England, and encourages the Ministerial People and disheartens opposition. It is transmitted all over Europe by our Enemies and cannot be contradicted by our Friends and has a pernicious Influence upon our affairs abroad.

We are gaping at France and Spain for Support, and are behaving in such a manner, as to discourage them from attempting our Relief. Depend upon it they will never aid us, while they think we are despairing of our own affairs.

Not a Single Company from our State at Head Quarters. What are We to think?

LB (MHi).

### Maryland Delegates to Thomas Johnson

Sir

[April 28? 1777]<sup>1</sup>

We have the Pleasure to inclose to Your Excellency an Order on the Treasury for 75,000 Dollars and on the Loan Office of Maryland for 25,000 in favour of our State. If it should not be equal to your Expectations or Wants it must be remedied another Time as We were left totally in the Dark with Respect to the Sum You wished for and of Course were obliged to name a Sum at a Venture.

Much more Service should we be able to render the State if Your Excellency would let Us more particularly into the Requests intended to be made and the Reasons on which they are grounded but while We remain ignorant untill a Letter is read in the House addressed to the President it cannot be expected that We should on a sudden be equally furnished as on Reflection with Arguments to support a Measure nor can We without being acquainted with them immediately to so much Purpose if at all enter into the Views of our State.

At the same Time the 100,000 Dollars were obtained a Motion was made for the 2000 Arms You requested for our State but this was referred to the Board of War notwithstanding as affecting a Picture of our defenceless State was drawn as lay in our Power. They have brought in no Report and I suppose will not 'till they have a Return of all the Arms both here and at Camp; when they do You shall be made acquainted with the Resolution of the House.<sup>2</sup>

When a Motion was made to Congress for a Battallion to be stationed in Somersett agreeable to your Request to Mr Morris,<sup>3</sup> they were informed directly after that the Tories to the Number of 150 were actually in Arms under Officers and had taken Post in a Cedar Swamp in Somersett County. Major Howard of Coll. Halls Battallion was given as the Author



of this Peice of Intelligence and with the Paragraph in your Letter was the Ground on which Congress proceeded. If the Delegates had been furnished with better Intelligence the Battallion alone possibly would have been granted.

We are Your Excellency's Most humble Servants,

Benjamin Rumsey

W. Smith

P.S. Ticonderoga is in great Danger, but 1500 Men there, and None that Genl. Gates can hear of marching up, Carletons Advanced Guard or a Party to reconnoiter within 45 Miles, the Eastern Delegates say their Men are on the March, 'tis feared they will not come Time enough to save it.

RC (MdAA). Written by Rumsey and signed by Rumsey and Smith.

<sup>1</sup> Congress authorized payment of the money discussed in paragraph one on April 26. The postscript to this letter was doubtless added on or after April 28, the day Congress received General Gates April 22 letter containing the information passed on by Rumsey. See *JCC*, 7:301, 304.

<sup>2</sup> The Maryland Council's letter to Congress of April 21 requesting 2000 stand of arms is in PCC, item 70, fols. 177-79, and *Md. Archives*, 16:221-22. See also Benjamin Rumsey to Thomas Johnson, May 1, 1777.

<sup>3</sup> See Benjamin Rumsey to Thomas Johnson, April 17, 1777.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

Ap. 29. 1777

This days Post brought me yours of 17th inst. and Miss Nabbys obliging Favour of the 16. This young Lady writes a very pretty Hand, and expresses her Thoughts with great Propriety.

I shall hardly excuse Miss from writing to me, so long as I have done, now I find she can write so well. I shall carefully preserve her Letter and if she neglects to write me frequently I shall consider this Letter as Proof that it is not Want of Abilities, but Want of Inclination.

The Death of Mrs. Howard I greatly and sincerely lament. She was one of the choice of the Earth.

The Account you give me of the Evasions of Your Regulations surprizes me not. I detest the Regulations as well as the Embargo. I find it is necessary for me to resign, for I never, of late, think like my Constituents. I am bound by their Sense in Honour and Principle—but mine differs from them every day. I always knew the Regulations would do more Hurt than good.

The inclosed Speculations upon the Health of the Army, were written I suppose by Dr. Rush,<sup>1</sup> as the former ones I know were done by him.

There is a letter of 20 Feb. from Dr. Lee, which says that Boston was to be attacked by Ten thousand Germans and three thousand British under Burgoin. But Circumstances since may have altered Cases.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:227.

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Rush's article on military hygiene first appeared in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, April 22, 1777. For its provenance, see Rush, *Letters* (Butterfield), 1:140-47.

## John Adams to James Warren

Dr Sir

Ap. 29. [17]77

I have but a few Moments to write, and these it is my Duty to improve, and faithfully to tell you, that unless you exert yourselves and send forward your Troops, it is my firm opinion that Howe will recruit his Army as fast as Washington and that from Americans. The People of New York and New Jersey, have been so scandalously neglected this Winter, that they are flying over to How in considerable Numbers. Nay our Army, under Washington is so dispirited by confirmed Weakness, that the Spirit of Desertion prevails among them, and there are more go over to How, from our Army than come from his to ours, two to one.

Every Man of the Massachusetts Quota ought to have been ready last December. And not one Man has yet arrived in the Field—and not three hundred Men at Ticonderoga. It is our Weakness, and Want of Power to protect the People that makes Tories and Deserters. I have been abominably deceived about the Troops. If Ticonderoga is not lost it will be because it is not attacked—and if It should be New England will bear all the shame and all the Blame of it. In plain English I beg to be supported or recalled.

The Torment of hearing eternally Reflections upon my Constituents, that they are all dead, all turned Tories, that they are small Beer, which froths and foams for a few Moments while it is new, and then flattens down, to worse than Water, without being able to contradict or answer them is what I will not endure.

By a Letter from A. Lee 20 Feb. Burgoigne is coming with Ten Thousand Germans and three thousand British to Boston.<sup>1</sup> They will go first to Rhode Island I suppose, From thence they will join How or go to Boston according to Circumstances. If you make up a decent Force under Washington in the Jersies, How must order them all to him, or he will be demolished, for he has but a small Force at present. If you leave Washington weak, They will march to Boston. I am &c

RC (MHi). In Adams' hand, though not signed.

<sup>1</sup> See Richard Henry Lee to George Washington, this date, note 3.

## Board of War to George Washington

Sir

War Office April 29th. 1777

I do myself the Honour of acknowledging the Receipt of yours of the 17th instant to the Board enclosing a List of Officers appointed in the new Levies by your Excellency.<sup>1</sup> I send you a Number of Returns of Stores in the Commissary Generals Departments of Provisions & Military Stores. Neither of these are accurate. I am certain the Military Stores are not exactly ascertained & I most ardently hope the Returns of Provisions are far under the Mark; but as this latter Department has not (except in Instances of Irregularities which have often been truly lamentable) fallen so immediately under the Notice of the Board, I cannot pronounce with any Certainty about it.

I was desired by the Board sometime ago & fear I neglected to inform you that Congress had made Provision in their medical Arrangement for regimental Surgeon's Mates as your Excellency has no Doubt since perceived in the printed Copies of the Resolves of Congress relative to the Hospitals &c.<sup>2</sup> The enclosed Letter is from our Town Major Nicola who would be obliged by your sending it by the First Flag.

I have the Honour to be, with the greatest Respect, your very obed  
Servt,

Richard Peters Secy<sup>3</sup>

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup> Washington's April 17 letter to Peters and the enclosed list of officers are in Washington, *Writings* (*Fitzpatrick*), 7:417-19.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:235.

<sup>3</sup> Peters' letter of this date to Commissary of Prisoners Elias Boudinot, enclosing "all the General Regulations of Congress I know of relative to the Objects of Your Department," is in the Boudinot Papers, DLC.

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Philadelphia April 29th 1777

An express going hence to Charlestown gives me an opportunity of writing you a few lines, but without being able to communicate any thing interesting.

We have at present in Congress a representation of all the Colonies, altho' the number of Delegates is not very considerable. New York entertains the most virulent jealousy against her Eastern Neighbours, and it is now heightened by an affair which is something embarrassing. The inhabitants of what is usually called the New Hampshire Grants, have attempted to set up a distinct State, and sent Delegates to Congress to claim a seat. New York remonstrated; the new State (called New Connecticut) seemed to be patronised by the Eastern Delegates; but the Congress laid the papers on the table, and I hope will be wise enough

to decline any interposition. I am for my own part clearly against assuming a Judiciary power. Such certainly never was the purpose of our Delegation. As I consider all jealousies as injurious to our common cause, and as laying the foundation of future evils, I use my best endeavours to discourage them; and I endeavour as much as possible to keep our attention to the main business, that of subduing our common enemy.

The Confederation comes under consideration two days in every week. On this arduous subject you will easily imagine I want the assistance of my colleagues, and indeed wish it reserved for men more able and experienced than I am. I shall give it however the most attentive consideration, and certainly shall agree to nothing, but on the clearest conviction and most uncontroverted principles. I shall very carefully abstract all the debates of any moment upon it, and every other subject, but particularly upon that, and when I transmit it to you, I will transmit the debates also.<sup>1</sup> At present, nothing but executive business is done, except the Confederation, and on mere executive business there are seldom any debates (and still more seldom any worth remembering). We have agreed to three articles; one containing the name; the second a declaration of the Sovereignty of the States, and an express provision that they be considered as retaining every power not expressly delegated; and the third an agreement mutually to assist each other against every enemy. The first and latter passed without opposition or dissent, the second occasioned two days debate. It stood originally the third article; and expressed only a reservation of the power of regulating internal police, and consequently resigned every other power. It appeared to me that this was not what the States expected, and, I thought, it left it in the power of the future Congress or General Council to explain away every right belonging to the States, and to make their own power as unlimited as they please. I proposed, therefore, an amendment, which held up the principle, that all sovereign Power was in the States separately, and that particular acts of it, which should be expressly enumerated, would be exercised in conjunction, and not otherwise; but that in all things else each State would Exercise all the rights and powers of sovereignty, uncontrolled. This was at first so little understood that it was some time before it was seconded, and South Carolina first took it up. The opposition was made by Mr Wilson of Pennsylvania, and Mr R. H. Lee of Virginia: in the End however the question was carried for my proposition, Eleven ayes, one no, and one divided. The no was Virginia; the divided, New Hampshire.<sup>2</sup> I was much pleased to find the opinion of accumulating powers to Congress so little supported, and I promise myself, in the whole business I shall find my ideas relative thereto nearly similar to those of most of the States. In a word, Sir, I am of opinion the Congress should have power enough to call out and apply the common strength for the common defence: but not for the partial purposes of ambition. We shall next proceed to the structure of the Common Councils; <sup>3</sup> and here,



I think, we shall meet with difficulties of the most arduous nature. The inequality of the States, and yet the necessity for maintaining their separate independence, will occasion dilemmas almost inextricable. You shall, Sir, know the whole progress of the matter, if I can conceive and convey it with sufficient clearness.

Maryland has set an exceeding good example to the other States in laying a tax. I hope it will be followed in ours. I mean not in the mode, but the thing. It is the only adequate remedy for the abundance of circulating money, with its consequent depreciation.

I have obtained, from Congress, leave to purchase two hundred gunlocks out of the public stores.<sup>4</sup> I have sent them to Hillsborough, and hope they will very soon be applied to the arms which are there preparing, and that the arms themselves will be put into the hands of soldiers, and sent to their proper places.

Opinions here are various with respect to the intended movements of the Enemy: 'tis certain however they have yet made none of any consequence. The officers in general are of opinion, they will attempt this city, and it seems determined to dispute it with them. This too is the prevailing opinion in Congress, and I am much pleased with the serenity and vigor with which we, at present, seem to regard objects of danger. Some of us, who are of a more martial cast, have gained the ascendancy so far that the timid are too fearful even to disclose their fears. I am pretty certain our next campaign will be active and interesting, if we are not disappointed in getting an army. The Northern, or what are usually called the New England, States are at present very languid: their troops do not at all come forward. Ticonderoga is in a very defenceless situation; and there appears very little reason to expect force there so soon as it will be wanting. We have no fresh intelligence from France, nor indeed have any vessels lately arrived from any part of Europe.

I am, Sir, exceedingly anxious to hear of our affairs in our own State: so uninformed as I am, I may perhaps consent to something that might do her an injury. I write very frequently to every part of the country, but never receive a line in answer. Except the letters from your Excellency dated in February, I have not received one from North Carolina since my arrival at Congress.

I wish I could be informed of the success of my request to be permitted to return in the summer, if the Assembly think proper to command my further attendance in this service: or whether they may not make choice of some more able man to fill the Department. I will detain you, Sir, no longer, only to declare that I am, with the greatest respect & esteem, your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

<sup>4</sup> The only known notes on the Articles of Confederation kept by Burke are those which he apparently put together in final form only after his return to North Carolina in November 1777. See Burke's Notes as well as his Remarks on

the Articles of Confederation, both of which have been conjecturally dated November 15, 1777.

<sup>2</sup> Burke's amendment significantly altered the locus of sovereignty in the proposed Confederation. Whereas the draft articles of confederation that had been approved for consideration in the summer of 1776 threatened to subordinate the states to Congress by stating that "Each State reserves to itself the sole and exclusive regulation and government of its internal police, in all matters that shall not interfere with the articles of this Confederation," Burke's amendment vindicated the principle of state sovereignty by flatly declaring in its final form that "Each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this confederation expressly delegated to the United States, in Congress assembled." This amendment, which ultimately became article two of the plan of Confederation approved by Congress in November 1777 and thereafter ratified by the states, guaranteed that under the Confederation supreme authority resided in the states rather than in the central government. See *JCC*, 5:675, 9:908; and Merrill Jensen, *The Articles of Confederation: An Interpretation of the Social-Constitutional History of the American Revolution, 1774-1781* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1940), pp. 129-39, 161-76.

<sup>3</sup> Burke subsequently submitted a plan for a two-house Congress that was rejected by the delegates. *JCC*, 7:328-29.

<sup>4</sup> See *JCC*, 7:292.

## John Hancock to Horatio Gates

Sir,

Philada April 29th 1777

I had the Honour of receiving your Favour of the 22d Inst. together with the Inclosures and immediately laid the same before Congress; in Consequence of which they came into the enclosed Resolves, to which I beg Leave to refer your Attention.<sup>1</sup>

As the Congress conceived your Dispatches to be of the utmost Importance, they resolved themselves into a Committee of the whole, and having fully considered the Matter, they do not wish that you should retain Possession of that Part of Ticonderoga which lies on the West Side of Lake Champlain, if in your Opinion, the Enemy may be more effectually prevented from penetrating the Country by applying your Force to defending and securing Fort Independence, and Lake George. I have the Honour to be, with the utmost Esteem, in great hurry, Sir, your most obedt. and very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

[P.S.] Please to deliver to the Pay Master the Papers Inclos'd which Respect him.<sup>2</sup>

You will observe the late Adjutant Genl Mr. Trumbull, has resign'd & Congress have impower'd you to fill that Vacancy, it is not the intention of Congress that Mr Trumbull should be reappointed.<sup>3</sup>

RC (NH). In the hand of Jacob Rush, with signature and postscript by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> Gates' letter to President Hancock and the enclosed letter from Gates to Washington of April 19 are in *PCC*, item 154, 1:161-72. After reading these letters on April 28, Congress immediately formed itself into a committee of the

whole and on the following day approved a series of resolutions designed to hasten reinforcements as well as money and supplies to Gates. *JCC*, 7:304, 306–8.

<sup>2</sup> See the resolves on paymasters adopted this day. *JCC*, 7:309–12.

<sup>3</sup> See James Lovell to John Trumbull, March 16, 1777, note.

## John Hancock to George Washington

Sir, Philada. April 29th. 1777.

You will perceive from the enclosed Resolves which I do myself the Honour of transmitting, that Congress have had under Consideration the State of Ticonderoga and have come into sundry Resolves on the Subject.<sup>1</sup> I beg Leave to refer your Attention to them, and am particularly to urge that you immediately write to the Eastern States and request them in the Name of Congress to pursue every Means for compleating and forwarding the Troops ordered for that Post. From the approach of the Enemy in that Quarter, it is highly probable, that Delay in the Matter, will be attended with the Loss of that important Pass.

I have wrote to Genl. Gates, and to the Convention of New York relative to the enclosed Resolves.<sup>2</sup> I have the Honour to be, with Sentiments of the greatest Respect, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Servt.

John Hancock Presidt

April 30th. Since writing the foregoing, Congress have come to sundry other Resolves, which I enclose and to which I must refer your Attention.<sup>3</sup> Your Favour of the 28th Inst.<sup>4</sup> I was duely honoured with, and immediately laid it before Congress.

RC (DLC). In the hand of Jacob Rush and signed by Hancock.

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:306–8.

<sup>2</sup> In his letter of this date to the New York Convention, Hancock wrote: "In Consequence of Dispatches from Genl. Gates containing Intelligence of the Approach of the Enemy towards Ticonderoga the Congress have come to the enclosed Resolves. From their great Importance I am persuaded you will exert yourselves to comply with them as far as they relate to your State in the fullest manner." PCC, item 12A, fol. 196.

<sup>3</sup> These were resolves of April 29–30 on the Delaware militia, paymasters, and food supplies. *JCC*, 7:305–6, 309–12, 315–16.

<sup>4</sup> This letter is in PCC, item 152, 4:117–19; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:489–91.

## Richard Henry Lee to Thomas Jefferson

Dear Sir Philadelphia April 29th. 1777

If I were to consider punctilio more than the suggestions of friendship, I should expect an answer to some of the letters I have written you, before I dispatched another. But I ever hated ceremonies, and shall not

commence ceremony with you. I wish it were in my power to give you any very interesting news, but alas, the slow assembling of an Army prevents any attempt from us upon the enemy, and will furnish them an opportunity of collecting reenforcements from all quarters. The French Ministry assure our Commissioners that few succors can be drawn from Germany, but we find they are endeavoring to supply deficiencies from among the Tories in the States of Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, where they have secret emissaries in abundance. For these purposes of corruption, it seems that Lord Howe is furnished with a Secretary, who is the greatest Adept in the art of bribing that now lives. I am afraid this Country furnishes too good materials for him to work upon. The plan of the British Court, if they can find Men and money and should not be disturbed by other wars, as it was settled in January last, was to reenforce Carleton and Howe, the latter to enter New England with his whole force for their *extermination*, whilst the former kept the middle Colonies in awe by invading N. York thro the Lakes. Burgoyne with 10,000 men chiefly Germans, to attack Virginia and Maryland. The Southern and Middle Colonies to be put under *Military Government*. This may be relied on as fact, and shews, if it wanted shewing, the just and merciful spi[rit] that animates the Leaders of our Enemies in Council. And I assure you, those that execute in the field are faithful representatives. It is on all hands agreed, that our own Tories are more formidable to us than the British force and that a few Leaders among these, are the Authors of all the mischief. Quere then, if it becomes not every Legislature to secure against their machinations by the most vigorous and discouraging laws? I really believe that numbers of our lazy, worthless young Men, will not be induced to come forth into the service of their Country unless the States adopt the mode recommended by Congress of ordering Drafts from the Militia.<sup>1</sup> This may induce the young and lazy to take the Continental bounty, rather than serve for nothing of that sort. If the 88 Batallions were once complete, adieu to British Tyranny and every chance for its succeeding.

Howes Army still remains on the Heights near Brunswick and Gen. Washington to occupy the Country round him.

Farewell dear Sir. Regard me as your affectionate friend,

Richard Henry Lee

RC (DLC). Jefferson, *Papers* (Boyd), 2: 13-14.

<sup>1</sup> See the April 14 resolves, *JCC*, 7: 262-63.

## Richard Henry Lee to George Washington

My dear Sir,

Philadelphia 29th April 1777

Being often obliged to write in great haste, is the reason that I sometimes omit to date my letters. But I am now to acknowledge the favor of



yours of the 24th and I readily acquiesce with your reasons concerning the Iron works.<sup>1</sup> I was indeed not apprised of so great a number of these being in Jersey. I shall certainly exert myself to have your views for Gen. Arnold and Colo. Huntington carried into execution:<sup>2</sup> This day the Committee of Secret Correspondence received a letter from Doctor Lee of later date as you will see than the former of which I sent you an extract. From the letter now received is taken what I have now the honor to inclose you.<sup>3</sup> I really believe it contains the true design of the enemy, and it may serve to explain the late Apparatus of Boats with Gen Howe, and the continuance of the Troops at Rhode Island. It may be some advantage to us to be apprized of their intentions. Doctor Lee is of opinion that the state of Europe was so critical, that it seemed impossible a war could hold off three months. However this may be, you are certainly right Sir, that our utmost vigor and vigilance should be exerted.

I am, with most unfeigned esteem, dear Sir Your most obedient and most humble servant,

Richard Henry Lee

P.S. I think this plan of dividing their force, highly advantageous for us. Be pleased to accept my thanks for Mr. Swans appointment.<sup>4</sup>

R.H. Lee

RC (DLC).

<sup>1</sup>For Lee's suggestion that iron workers be exempted from military service, see Lee to Washington, April 16, 1777.

<sup>2</sup>Benedict Arnold was belatedly promoted to major general on May 2 and Jedediah Huntington was appointed a brigadier general on the 12th. *JCC*, 7:323, 347.

<sup>3</sup>The enclosed extract, which Richard Henry labeled "Bordeaux, February 20, 1777," is identical to the first paragraph of the Arthur Lee letter printed under a February 18 date in Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:272-73.

<sup>4</sup>John Swan had recently been appointed to a captaincy. See Washington's April 25 letter to George Baylor in Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:470.

## Marine Committee Resolutions

Philada. April 29th 1777

In Marine Committee.

It being this day determined to form a plan for intercepting the Jamaica Fleet that will Sail from that Island for Great Britain about the 26th day of July next, Resolved

That this Committee will Order such of the Continental Frigates and Cruizers as can conveniently be spared or appointed for this service to Randevouz at Abacoa One of the Bahama Islands near to New Providence on or before the 25th day of July next.

That as it is uncertain what number or which of the ships or Cruizers may be so Ordered, those that arrive at the said Station are to wait until

the 28th day of July, each employing themselves in taking on board wood, Water &c if wanted and to be got until that day when the several Commanders are to meet and producing their Commissions to each other the Senior officer is to be deemed Commodore and may hoist a broad Pennant during the continuance of this service. The Commodore and every Commander are then to pay due obedience to the following Instructions exerting themselves in their respective stations to execute them and to accomplish what this Committee have in view.

The grand Object of this expedition being to intercept the Jamaica fleet that will be departing from that Island about the Time the Commodore assumes his Command, he is to hold a Council of war assisted by all the Commanders and determine the following points.

First where is the best Cruizing Ground.

Second, How to station the Squadron over that ground so that the enemies fleet cannot pass by unobserved.

Third, fix Signals for discovering the Enemy, their numbers, force and Number of the Convoy, how they bear, distance &c.

Fourth, fix Signals for knowing each Other generally, & each ship in particular with all other necessary & proper Signals for the well governing & managing the fleet during the Cruize and in time of action.

Fifth, each Commander to be supplied with a Copy of these orders, Copies of the Proceedings of the Council of War, Signals &c and copies of such other orders as the Commodore & council may think proper to be given to each captain in addition to these Instructions which orders are to have the same object in view and are to be calculated for the more effectual accomplishment of it. The Commodore or Council of war are empowered to order or do any thing they may think necessary or essential to enable the Squadron to perform the intended service, whether pointed out by the Committee or not. The Commodore must call on each Captain for any intelligence he may have gained respecting our enemies before he arrived at the Rendezvous and particularly respecting the Jamaica fleet, the force and number of Ships of war intended as Convoy to that fleet, and proper advantage must be made of any intelligence so gained. These things done and the sooner they are accomplished the better, the Squadron must weigh and sail under the Signals and Orders of the Commodore to the appointed Station which we suppose will be near the Havannah and as there will be some time to wait for the Jamaica fleet getting that length such time cannot be better spent, than in repeating the Signals agreed on constantly in order that they may become familiar to every one, and whenever they appear to be misunderstood to any Ship or Ships an explanation should immediately take place. The men should be constantly exercised at the Guns, and infinite pains taken on board every Ship to sweeten the air, and keep not only the ship clean but the Men so in their Cloathing and Persons. During this

Cruise there is little doubt but Prizes will be taken by the Squadron before the Jamaica fleet appears and such may be sent into Georgia or Carolina, but in doing this care must be taken that no ship is much weakened by sending away their men in such Prizes. Should they be of little value it may probably be best to burn them and encourage the Seamen found on board to enter our Service by offering them share of Prize Money to be taken, Pay and allowance equal to those already engaged and assurance of good treatment. It may not be amiss for the Commodore to send One of the small Cruizers into the Havannah with a Polite Letter to the Governor asking leave for the Ships of war belonging to the United states of America to send in their Prizes there until convenient to bring them away or for sale if that will be permitted. When the main object of this enterprize appears the Jamaica Fleet, it must be the business of the Commodore to keep the Frigates together until he finds out the strength of the Convoy and if it be such as he judges he can cope with, with a tolerable prospect of success, He is to make the proper disposition for Attacking to the best advantage and engage their ships of war whilst all the smaller vessells are employed in attacking and taking the Merchantmen. It must be remembered that the enemy generally send home for Convoy such of their ships of war as have been long in the West Indies. They are frequently foul and ill manned which are circumstances favourable for engaging them, even if they should appear of superior force. If you can but make Prizes of the Convoy or any part of them, we think it will then be in the power of the Squadron to take any number of the Merchantmen and such as cannot be manned and brought into Port may be sunk or Burned. Should the Convoy consist of such or so many Ships as it would be folly or rashness to engage, the Squadron in that case had best to seperate and hover after the fleet, for as we have little doubt but most of our ships will outsail theirs, being cleaner you may in this manner pick up a vast many of their Merchant ships altho protected by Superior force, and for this purpose every ship or Cruiser may follow the fleet as long and as far as the Commander shall think prudent, but the Squadron is not to seperate until the Commodore shall give orders or make signals for that purpose. If the Squadron seperate in this manner each Commander will return into the first safe Port in the States after he has performed his Cruise and rendered his Country all the services he can for that voyage, each giving us immediate notice of his Arrival and preparing again the Vessel he commands for further service against he receives fresh Orders. On the Contrary if the Squadron are successful in taking a number of Prizes it will be best to bring them into the first safe Port or Ports in these states delivering the Prizes to the Agents, and each Ship to be got ready for further services immediately. If the fleet arrive any where in the neighbourhood of Congress we can and will transmit fresh Orders—

if too distant the Commodore must call a Council of war of all the Commanders with him and any enterprize or expedition planned by that Council, that has for its object the service of the united states of America, to distress or disable the enemies of these states or to Capture their ships of war or Merchantmen will meet our Approbation & if executed with vigour will merit the praise of all America. Our ships should never be Idle. The Navy is in its infancy and a few brilliant strokes at this Cera would give it a Credit and importance that would induce seamen from all parts to seek the employ for nothing is more evident than that America has the means and must in time become the first Maritime power in the world. The several commanders employed to execute this Plan now laid down will have an opportunity to open the first Ideas of the importance of our Navy and a glorious chance of immortalizing their own names besides enriching all the brave Fellows under their command. To them then under Heaven we look for that success which is the Object of our wishes.<sup>1</sup>

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> According to Gardner W. Allen, *A Naval History of the American Revolution*, 2 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1913), 1:216-21, the Marine Committee's ambitious plan was never carried out, owing to an inadequate supply of American warships.

## Marine Committee to Nicholas Biddle

Sir

April 29th 1777

You are directed in the Instructions<sup>1</sup> in which these are inclosed to break the seal of this Letter on the 10th day of July next. At that time we expect you will be cruizing near the Island of Hispaniola, and that agreeable to our former Orders you will have the Randolph Frigate in good Order and every way fit for Action. We have it in contemplation to Strike a Stroke against the British West India Trade that will be severely felt in the Pecuniary way, and that will at the same time if well executed give an eclat to our Navy that will be of infinite service to it. We propose that you shall have a share in the execution of this plan and hope it may be a distinguished One.

You know that the largest and most valuable fleets of Jamaica Sugar Ships always depart from that Island about the 26th day of July under Convoy and that they pass through the Gulph on their way to England. Our design is to intercept this Fleet and take, sink, burn and destroy as many of them as possible. You are therefore to repair to the Island of Abacoa near New Providence which is the place we have appointed for the Randevouz of such Ships & Cruizers as we may find it in our power to order on this service and you must make it a point to be there on or



before the 25th July that being the day we shall fix for every Ship or Vessel being at Abacoa.

When the fleet are collected at that place the Captains must compare Commissions and the Senior is to be deemed Commodore to whom the Inclosed Orders are addressed, every Captain in the fleet will be furnished with a Copy and it is expected not only from the Captains but from every Officer in the fleet that they will use their most strenuous endeavours to effect this business in a Compleat and effectual manner and for this purpose it will be necessary to cultivate Harmony and good understanding with One Another. We also recommend it as a constant Object of your Attention to encourage the seamen and Petty officers which you take on board Prizes to enter our service and bring as many of them as possible into America.

We doubt not you will signalize your Zeal upon this occasion and happy shall be at a future day to congratulate you on the Accomplishment of this enterprize.

We are sir your friends & obedt servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Not found, but see Marine Committee Resolutions, this date, which consist chiefly of the instructions that were apparently enclosed.

## Marine Committee to the Commissioners at Paris

Gentlemen

April 29th. 1777

Should you see this Letter it will be forwarded to you by Thomas Thompson Esqr. Commander of the Raleigh Frigate in the Service of the United States of America. This Ship was built in New Hampshire where is no Foundreys for Casting Cannon and the distance from the places where they are Cast to Portsmouth where the frigate now lies is so great that we think it better to put on board such Guns as can be got for her in the neighbourhood and send her to France to be compleated, than to Hall them by Land such an amazing distance, or than to trust them by Water to her, or her along the Coast to them, now that the enemies Ships are so numerous and powerful at the Mouths of our Bays and Harbours. We have ordered her to Brest as the most suitable Port for supplies. Captain Thompson will transmit you an Indent of all the Guns, Stores and Materials he wants and we hope you may procure an order for his being Supplied out of the Kings arsenals or Stores. Orders are given to the Commercial Agents to pay your drafts for the amount of such Supplies, but if you cannot obtain them in the way proposed, you will write to the Said Agents William Lee & Thomas Morris Esqrs. to purchase every thing necessary on the best terms and in the most expeditious manner they can.<sup>1</sup>

We have told Captain Thompson if you had any particular service, Cruize or enterprize to point out for the benefit of these States, that he should obey your Orders, otherways to return to America well manned and fitted Cruizing on our enemies ships the whole voyage. You will therefore write to him giving such Instructions as you may think best calculated to promote the honor, Interest and welfare of these States.<sup>2</sup> With great esteem and regard we remain Honorable Gentlemen, Your obedt. servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> For an account of Capt. Thompson's subsequent voyage to France and the assistance he received there from the American commissioners, see Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:436; and William J. Morgan, *Captains to the Northward: The New England Captains in the Continental Navy* (Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishing Co., 1959), pp. 97-102.

<sup>2</sup> The American commissioners' instructions to Thompson, dated November 25, 1777, are in Franklin, *Writings* (Smyth), 7:73-75.

## Marine Committee to John Dupuy

Sir<sup>1</sup>

April 29th 1777

This may probably be delivered to you by Captain Nicholas Biddle of the Randolph Frigate which will be Cruizing on your Coast this Summer and should Captain Biddle pay you a visit we request that you will supply him with any Stores or necessarys the Ship may stand in need of. Should he send any Prizes into your Port we hope you will be permitted to make sale of them and that you will do it to the best advantage.

Mr. Morris gives us assurance of your attachment to the American cause which induces us to trouble you on this occasion, and should you be led into advance for the supplies Captain Biddle may require, you may depend on being reimbursed by Consignments of Goods made you for that purpose, or probably Mr. Ceronio at Cape François may have funds in his hands as considerable Remittances are now going to him.

We are sir, your very hble serts

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Dupuy was a merchant in Môle Saint-Nicolas, Saint-Domingue. See Marine Committee to Benjamin Dunn, April 19, 1777.

## Marine Committee to James Nicholson

Sir

April 29th 1777

In consequence of Letters just now received from the executive Powers of the State of Maryland we have it in charge from Congress to direct

that you do not leave the Port of Baltimore with the frigate *Virginia* under your command until you receive further orders from Congress or from this Committee.<sup>1</sup>

We are sir, your very hble servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> Captain Nicholson was locked in a bitter struggle with Maryland state authorities over the issue of impressment. After the Marine Committee had ordered him on April 8 to proceed to Martinique, Nicholson began to impress men in Baltimore to make up a full crew for the *Virginia*. The Maryland Council of Safety wrote to Nicholson on April 24, protesting that he had no authority to impress Marylanders and ordering him to release all who had been impressed. Nicholson saucily replied on the following day that he was confident Congress would approve of his actions and alleged that impressment was an acceptable practice in other American cities. The Maryland authorities thereupon sent their correspondence with Nicholson to Congress, which, sensitive to the rights of the states, declared on May 1 that it would never countenance violations of state law by Continental officers, temporarily suspended Nicholson from his command, and threatened to dismiss him from Continental service altogether unless he made "satisfaction" for his disrespectful reply to Maryland officials. On the same day, moreover, Congress instructed the Marine Committee to "give the necessary orders for immediately dismissing the men impressed by Captain Nicholson." Nicholson apologized to the Maryland authorities and thereby retained command of the *Virginia*, but the Marine Committee created fresh difficulties by ordering the release only of those impressed men "who have not Signed the Marine Articles and received the Continental bounty." Maryland officials demanded the release of all the men Nicholson had impressed, and Congress rebuked the Marine Committee for so construing Congress' orders, but in the end the captain was able to retain the services of a number of them who finally agreed voluntarily to sail with him. See *JCC*, 7:312, 318-19; PCC, item 70, fols. 195-201, 209-10, 213; *Md. Archives*, 16:226-27, 229-30, 244, 255, 263-64, 266-69; Marine Committee to James Nicholson, April 8, and to Thomas Johnson, May 1; and William Paca to the Maryland Governor and Council, May 24, 1777.

## Marine Committee to Thomas Thompson

Sir

April 29th 1777

We have long been anxious to hear of the Raleigh frigate under your Command being compleated for the sea but hitherto the difculty of obtaining her Guns has been insuperable. You may rest assured that the measures you have taken to obtain them from the Furnace in Massachusetts Bay are quite agreeable to us. We approve very much of the Iron Ballast being taken from the Alfred, and in case that should not be sufficient you are authorized to take a quantity out of the Columbus so much of her Iron Ballast as may be necessary and shall defray such reasonable Charges as attend the doing of it, and further we are well pleased that Mr Paine and Mr Bradford came into this measure and gave you their assistance. You are therefore to return to the furnace in

Massachusetts Bay and immediately try or prove the Guns already cast for the Raleigh agreeable to the standard or mode given you herewith. If you find they stand this proof urge the utmost expedition in completing the set. We hope a sufficient quantity of the proper Metal will be got from the Ballast of the Two Ships mentioned, but if that falls short you may then make application in our name and produce these orders to the Council or assembly of Massachusetts Bay to spare you what may be wanting from the quantity lately sent them from Maryland and we will pay for or replace it. We expect and hope that you will get a compleat set of good Guns for the ship by these means, and if you do you must take the most effectual means to get them on board as expeditiously as possible. Apply to Mr. Langdon the Agent to second and support your endeavours and compleat the Complement of Hands, take in the necessary Stores, Provisions, Arms & ammunition for a Six Months Cruise if they can conveniently be had—if not you must be content with less—make the ship as compleat as you can but don't loose time or lavish away Money. Expedition and Vigilance are excellent qualities in a Sea Officer. Frugallity is an absolutely necessary One in all men that are connected with the American Revenue. These things duly attended to proceed as soon as you can on a Cruise. The first thing after you get out to sea is to try your Ships sailing. If she goes fast you may venture to take liberties with our enemies, if she does not you must keep clear of those of superior force and many of these we fancy will be found on the American Coasts. We hope you will be at Sea by the Month of June and if so your first Cruise had best be employed in seeking the Enemies Transports and Provision Vessels bound in for New York chusing the best station for falling in with them, and as you make Prizes send them into the first safe Port to the care of the Continental Agent. Thus you may employ the ship until the first of July when you are to open the sealed Instructions that we shall send you in a very short Time.<sup>1</sup> Those Instructions will direct your attention to an object of importance and you must keep the Raleigh in good order, well manned, clean, and in every Shape fit for Action or as much so as possible against that time. The said Instructions will point out your business after that date, therefore we now return to the supposition of your not getting the Guns wanted from the Furnace in Massachusetts Bay. If it so happens that you cannot get the whole there get as many as you can that will stand the proof, and apply to the State of Massachusetts to furnish what may be wanting, if they cannot, then apply to Mr Paine or Mr Bradford to assist you in purchasing as many good 12, 9 or 6 pounders as will fill your Ports. You may do this either in Rhode Island, Massachusetts or New Hampshire wherever you can suit the ship best and cheapest, get the whole on board with expedition, take in suitable Stores and ammunition, make up the Complement of about 150 men including Marines and take the first favourable opportunity to go



out to Sea and push off the Coast. Should any of the Continental frigates or Cruizers be in your neighbourhood write to the Captains and if inferior in Rank to you, order him or them to come and Convoy you off; if superior inform him it is our Orders that he or they do it for which this shall be his or their justification and you may send him or them Coppies of this Paragraph which he or they are hereby required to obey. When you get fairly out to Sea and are but thus partially armed, you must make the best of your way for Brest in France taking care on the Passage to avoid large Ships of war, but we hope you will take some Prizes from the Enemy and carry them in with you, these to be sold and the Continental share of such Prizes must be sold to pay for Guns, stores and charges. On your arrival at Brest write to William Lee & Thomas Morris Esqrs. at Nantes and to the Honble Dr Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane and Arthur Lee Esqrs. in Paris informing them of your arrival and that your errand to France is to compleat the ship with a proper set of Guns telling them how many and the different sorts, mention also what other Stores and supplies you will want and request them to inform you whom to value on, and to take effectual measures to prepare with expedition all the supplies you need, on this head you must never cease urging them until you get what you want. When you get the proper Guns, strike the others in your Hold and keep them there until your return to America. You may ask the Honble Dr Franklin, Silas Deane & Arthur Lee Esqrs. if they have any commands for you and if they desire you to go on any particular service, Cruise or expedition you must obey their orders. If they have nothing particular you will take in water, Provisions &c for a long voyage and leaving Brest proceed on a Cruise—taking of Prizes and distressing the enemy must be the object of your Cruise but particularly we recommend your looking out for some of their East India Ships. You will find the Ports of France and Spain open to your Prizes with liberty of selling them there. You must be careful to keep your ship well manned, and whenever you take Prizes give great encouragement to Seamen and Petty officers to enter.

Any Prizes you take with Cloathing (particularly Blankets), arms, ammunition or any of those articles that you think will be particularly useful in America should be sent for the first safe Port in these states. We do not object to your Cruizing a reasonable time in the European seas provided our Commissioners at the Court of France are of opinion it will be more useful than returning, otherways you will return back for these Coasts Cruizing on the enemies Ships during the passage, and should you think it proper to call at any of the French Islands for information we have no objection. You must make it a point to encourage Seamen to enter our service wherever you meet with them. Use your People well but preserve strict discipline, attend most carefully to keep a clean ship or

the Men will grow sickly, treat Prisoners with Humanity and upon all occasions support with spirit the Honor of the American flag.

We are sir your friends & servants

LB (DNA: PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book).

<sup>1</sup> The Marine Committee finally sent these instructions to Thompson enclosed in a brief June 1 letter of transmittal signed by committee secretary John Brown. PCC Miscellaneous Papers, Marine Committee Letter Book, fol. 112; and Paulin, *Marine Committee Letters*, 1:137-38. The instructions themselves have not been found.

## New York Delegates to the New York Convention

Sir,

Philadelphia, April 29th, 1777

In our last, we hinted at the want of vigour and Exertion in this State. We wish it was in our power to assure you that an effectual Remedy had been applied; but though the Enemy is daily expected an astonishing langour prevails, and the embodying a competent Force to oppose the meditated invasion, seems to be a distant Object. The Seat of this disease is not an Indifference to the Cause, for the whigs are sufficiently numerous to defend their Country against any army that can at present be brought against it. The unhappy Dispute about their Constitution is the fatal Rock on which they have split, and which threatens them with Destruction. We ardently wish that in our own State the utmost Caution may be used to avoid a like calamity. Every wise Man here wishes that the establishment of new Forms of Government had been deferred: they see that the Union, vigour and Security derived from Conventions and committees are not to be found in any State under its new Constitution.

We have hitherto left the subject of our instructions untouched; but in the course of a few days they shall be introduced.<sup>1</sup> To become acquainted with the persons and characters of the members requires some time, and is of great importance. We find several of our House desirous to know the merits of our Claim. Congress, from your past letters, have a Right to expect a representation; and we wait with Impatience for the reports and Maps, to elucidate our boundary.

Colonel Varrick gives General Schuyler a disagreeable account of the Disaffection prevailing in Albany County. General Gates writes in warm terms to Congress on the same Subject.<sup>2</sup> We wish to know the particulars, and the Means which Convention pursues for the Suppression of this dangerous Spirit. It is of Moment to our State that we receive the earliest Intelligence of every material Occurrence which can excite curiosity or animadversion, especially since the change in the Military Command. General Gates is far from being partial to our State. You cannot be at a

Loss for the Reason. Our Revolters seem to possess his Esteem: he was in their councils here, and has left a most extraordinary recommendation in their Favor, which, if we are at liberty, shall be communicated. He mentions that he has ordered 500 troops into Albany. Is this in concert with the Convention or Committee, and founded on good reasons? For when we are beyond measure distressed for troops, it must be an urgent necessity indeed which can justify detaining so large a number in that City. In the critical circumstances of our Northern Frontiers, give us leave to suggest the Propriety of having a Committee of your House on the Spot, to represent the State, watch over its Enemies, and secure its reputation against Intrigue and Calumny, and above all, to take Care that in Case of any Misfortune to the Northward, our respectable Constituents may neither deserve or suffer Reproach.

We are, with the utmost Regard Sir, Your most obedient, humble servants,

Phil. Livingston,

Jas. Duane,

Wm. Duer.

RC (N). Written by Duer and signed by Duer, Duane, and Livingston. *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 2:428–29. RC damaged; missing words supplied from Tr.

<sup>1</sup> On April 7 the New York Convention had instructed the New York delegates to oppose the admission into Congress of any delegates from Vermont and to forward any congressional resolves that infringed upon the rights of New York. *Journals of N.Y. Prov. Cong.*, 1:868–69. Congress' role in the dispute between New York and Vermont is discussed in William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, April 7, 1777, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Gates to President Hancock, April 22, together with an enclosed letter from Gates to Washington of April 19, 1777, in PCC, item 154, 1:161–72.

## John Adams to Abigail Adams

April 30, 1777

We have a fine Piece of News this Morning of the March of 2000 of the Enemy, and destroying a fine Magazine there—and the stupid sordid cowardly torified Country People let them pass without Opposition.<sup>1</sup>

All New England is petrified, with Astonishment, Horror, and Despair, I believe in my Conscience. They behave worse than any Part of the Continent. Even in N. Jersey 2000 Men could not have marched so far.

RC (MHi). Adams, *Family Correspondence* (Butterfield), 2:228–29.

<sup>1</sup> Adams is referring to the British raid on the Continental magazine at Danbury, Conn. General Washington's April 28 letter to President Hancock describing the action was read in Congress this day. See *JCC*, 7:314; and Washington, *Writings* (Fitzpatrick), 7:490–91. See also Robert McDevitt, *Connecticut Attacked: A British Viewpoint, Tryon's Raid on Danbury* (Chester, Conn.: Pequot Press, 1974).

## Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell

Sir

Philadelphia April 30th 1777

Some very disagreeable intelligence is just opened. Two thousand of the enemy landed in Connecticut, & have penetrated as far as Danbury (about thirty miles into the country) without opposition. We had a considerable magazine of provisions there, which have mostly fallen into their hands. We are anxious to hear other particulars of this affair. I will make no comment on it, because I hope before long to give you some more agreeable account of it.

I have the honor to be, Your Excellency's very ob'd. serv't,  
Thos Burke

Tr (Nc-Ar).

## John Hancock to Arthur St. Clair

Sir,

Philada. April 30th. 1777.

The Congress having received Intelligence of the Approach of the Enemy towards Ticonderoga, have thought proper to direct you to repair thither without Delay.<sup>1</sup> I have it therefore in Charge to transmit the enclosed Resolve, and to direct that you immediately set out on the Receipt hereof. I am, Sir, your most obed. & very hble Sevt.

J H Presid.

LB (DNA: PCC, item 12A). Addressed: "Major Genl. St. Clair, at Bedford in Pennsylvania."

<sup>1</sup> See *JCC*, 7:307, as well as Horatio Gates to Hancock, April 22, 1777, in *PCC*, item 154, 1:161-64.

## Philip Schuyler to George Washington

Dear Sir

Philadelphia April 30t. 1777

Inclose your Excellency sundry Resolutions of Congress, which are to be executed, if approved of, by you, and also the Quarter Master General and Commissary General's orders to their Deputies for that purpose, to be expedited or detained as your Excellency shall judge best.<sup>1</sup>

The Reasons which induced the House to adopt the first Resolutions were founded on an apprehension that if the Enemy should penetrate the Country by Hudson's River, and your Excellency should be under the Necessity to march into Ulster, that you would be greatly distressed for provisions, that part of the Country affording little or none of the Meat Kind altho' there is great plenty of Flour, not less than 20,000



Barrels as the president of the Convention informs me in a Letter of the 18<sup>th</sup>. Instant; that it did not appear to the House that the Removal of the salted Meat from Derby and the three other places mentioned in the Resolve would put you to any Inconveniency. If you should be under the Necessity of marching into that part of New York on the East Side of Hudsons River, Connecticut or the Massachusetts Bay a Supply of the Meat Kind can be furnished from or in the two last mentioned States and Flour in or from the former. That the Wheat mentioned in the fourth Resolve should remain where it is to be thence sent into the more interior part of the Massachusetts Bay, should the Enemy attempt a Debarkation in any of the Eastern States, and thereby render it necessary to keep up an army in that Quarter. The fifth Resolution was founded on a Conviction that there is a Sufficiency of Flour in the District mentioned for the Support of the Northern Army. These being the general principles on which the Resolutions I have quoted were founded, the others in a Manner follow of Course.

Inclose your Excellency Copy of a Return of the Wheat and Flour now in the County of Albany exclusive of what is purchased for the use of the army, which is very considerable.

I propose, in a Day or two, to resign my Commission, as soon as I have done it I shall transmit to your Excellency my Reasons for such a Step.

Inclose your Excellency Colonel Wood's Return. I have attempted, ever since my last, to procure a Return of the Troops in this City, but hitherto in vain. I am however promised it to Day, and shall transmit your Excellency a Copy by the first Conveyance. I believe they amount to about eleven hundred many of which wait for Cloathing and accoutrements & others move to Bristol to Day. I am dear Sir most respectfully,  
Your Excellency's obedient humble Servant, Ph. Schuyler

RC (DLC). In the hand of John Lansing, Jr., and signed by Schuyler.

<sup>1</sup>Schuyler sent Washington a variety of resolves passed this day "for establishing Magazines of provisions in such place as may best secure them from falling into the Hands of the Enemy." *JCC*, 7:315-16.

## Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Sr.

Honored Sir

Philadelphia April 30<sup>th</sup> 1777

By a letter received by a Member of Congress from his Brother in France, dated 20<sup>th</sup> of February we have advice That Britain has Engaged ten thousand more German Troops who with 3000 British are to come to Boston under the Command of General Burgoin, That General Howe is to come to this Place;<sup>1</sup> By a letter from General Wayne we are Informed that the Enemy were in motion at the Northward, that a party had been discovered about 45 miles from Tyconderoga. Our force there is weak—

and wants an immediate reinforcement; General Gates was at Albany the 22d Instant. I think a vigorous exertion immediately in New Jersey would be Decisive as to the present Campaign. The loss of a Short time now, may Occasion the loss of much blood and treasure hereafter which might be Saved by a good Improvement of the present opportunity. Two Days has been Spent in considering the Confederation and three articles of it agreed to, it is proposed that it Shall be attended to at least two Days in each week, till it is finished.<sup>2</sup> I very much wish the Arrival of more Delegates. General Wolcot & I both want to go home. I must leave Congress soon whether they come or not, for my Constitution will not admit of So close an Application to business much longer, as I have been confined to for four months past.

I remain Your Honrs. Obedient humble Servant,

Roger Sherman

RC (Ct).

<sup>1</sup> See Richard Henry Lee to George Washington, April 29, 1777, note 3.

<sup>2</sup> According to the journals the proposed confederation was debated on April 21 and 25 pursuant to a resolve of the 8th. *JCC*, 7:240, 287, 300. For details concerning these debates, especially on the issue of state sovereignty, see Thomas Burke to Richard Caswell, April 29, 1777.

## William Whipple to Joseph Whipple

My Dear Bror.

No. 11

Philadelphia 30 Apl 1777

My last acknowledged the receipt of such of Yours as have come to hand, I thot I had wrote you that I wish'd to be releav'd by the Middle of May, if I did not mention it to you, I certainly did to some body else for that has been my constant wish. My Colleague will not be very Cerimonious, he will set out in a few days, but I shod think myself inexcusable in leaving the State unrepresented at this Critical & important day, but my Health absolutely requires a Respite which I hope will be given me soon. It is very Unfortunate that Guns cannot be procur'd for the Ships, but I still hope the Raleigh will be supplied from the Furnice lately Erected in the Massachusetts, but why may we not have a Furnice in New Hampshire. I have heard there is a large Quantity of ore in Barrington, at no great distance from water carriage & streams suitable for Erecting works on, abound in that Country, & there is a Sufficiency of wood to supply a Furnice for many years, if the Proprietor of the land, nor the State will undertake to erect works, it wod be worth while for the Continent to do it provided the Ore is suitable for Cannon & the land could be obtain'd on reasonable terms. The American Navy will be increasing & I know of no place so suitable for Building ships as Piscataqua River & it wod be very convenient to have the Guns made near where the Ships are

Built. This is a matter worthy Consideration, I wish you woud pay some attention to it & let me know if its probable any thing can be done.

Inclos'd you have Invoice of 10 bbs flour on board the Friends Adventure half of which I intended for you. As you had the trouble of fitting out those two vessels for Baltimore I suppose you will have the selling of the flour as greatest part of it will be for sail. The Army is increasing 'tho not so fast as I could wish. I cannot accot for the inactivity of the Enemy unless it is their weakness. I must refer you to Capt Thompson for news as perhaps he may collect some in his way home, at present there is none here 'tho we are in daily Expectation of a Packet from France, which no doubt will bring very interesting intelligence. The Bays of Delaware & Chesepeake are still infested by the Enemies ships, which makes the navigation very Hazerdous. Many of our merchantmen fall into their hands and some Privateers have been taken by them, in Perticular a Brig. mounting 16 Guns belonging to South Carolina Commanded by Tho. Pickering. The Culture of Hemp is a matter worthy of attention, I think if our Legislatures were to give suitable encouragement for that purpose, very good consequences might result therefrom, I just throw out the hint leaving it for those who have more leasure to form the Plan.

Your most affecte. Bror,

Wm Whipple

RC (MH-H).

## Oliver Wolcott to Laura Wolcott

My Dear,

Philadelphia 30 April 1777

I Wrote to you the 23d inst which you have or will receive, as my Letters go by the Post I beieve they go safe. I have recd. no Letters from Litchfield since my last. I hoped to have had one by this Post, which I was the more Solicitous to receive as by Rhina's Letter I perceived that your Health was not good. I cannot say precisely when I shall Return Home, but my Determination is to do so within the Next Month. I have expected before now to have heard that some of the Gentlemen appointed to attend Congress were on their Way from our State, but I hear Nothing from them. I have Wrote to Mr Huntington to advice Me upon the Subject from whom I may expect soon to hear.<sup>1</sup> I think after this it may not be best to Write to Me to this Place except upon Subjects uninteresting so as that it may be indifferent wheither the Letters are Opened by others or not, as I hope to leave this Place earlier than I may expect Acknowledgment of this Letter. By the Blessing of God I injoy Health. Nothing Very Material has ocured since my last. The Enemy may probably be soon in Motion and N England may be a Very Material Object with them. I think that it will be so which induces Me the More to Wish to Return.<sup>2</sup>

I intended to have Wrote a Letter to Mr Adams to whom I am much indebted for his Favours in Writing to Me. But I fear I shall not have Time to do so this Post. My best Regards to my Children and Freinds. May the Almighty Bless you and them. I am yours, with the most inviolable Affection,

Oliver Wolcott

RC (CtHi).

<sup>1</sup> Wolcott's letter to Samuel Huntington has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> Later this day Wolcott also wrote the following note to his wife: "Since I Wrote you my Letter of this Date and which has gone into the Post Office I have heard of the Irruption of the Enemy into Danbury, an Event which demands the publick Attention. It has been for some Time my Opinion that N England would be a Material Object of their Attention. Wheither I can be of any Service to my Country either there or here I cannot say, But if my Wishes were gratefied it would receive a Benefit from Me. This Event has determined Me to Return Home which may be perhaps as soon as you shall receive this Letter Unless the Post should pass thru Litchfield. It has been a Matter of some surprise that no Gentleman has yet come from our State. But in my present Veiw I think it More probable that I can be of more service in my own Country than here which has determined my Choice." Wolcott Papers, CtHi. His request for leave was granted by Congress on May 2. *JCC*, 7:321.



## APPENDIX

### Elbridge Gerry to James Warren

Dear sir

Philadelphia March 31. 1777

In Consequence of your Letters of the 7th July last & the 17th Sepr., with the Depositions transmitted by Mr. Lothrop relative to the Deficiency of Money charged in your Account as paymaster General, I have layed the Matter before Congress, & obtained an Order by which your Account is ballanced in the Treasury office agreeable to the Abstract inclosed.<sup>1</sup> The Claim was supported on principles of Equity, as it plainly appeared that You had opened an additional office at the request of the General at Cambridge, & that the Loss happened in Consequence thereof. The affair is delicate in its Nature & so considered by Congress, who, while they are fully satisfied with your Conduct, wish to avoid the Inconveniences arising from the precedent; which You will doubtless assist them in, by explaining the Matter to the inquisitive, or what is preferable, saving *⟨Yourself⟩* as far as possible the Necessity of this Measure.

We have this Day received from your Quarter the Agreeable Information of the 12,000 Arms & 50 Tons of Powder & Clothing which arrived at Portsmouth; <sup>2</sup> in addition to which I have the pleasure to inform You that 6800 fire arms with Bayonets arrived in this River last Week together with 2100 Gunlocks and 31 Tons powder at Baltimore.

We have also a Letter from Doctor Franklin, Doctor Lee, & Mr Deane at Paris, Where Things wear a most favourable Aspect.<sup>3</sup> Thus much I may venture to communicate; the *⟨Collective Body⟩* people of France are enthusiastic for America; two Millions of Livres are offered to the Commissioners by private Gentlemen without either Interest or Security; the Cry is general for a Declaration of War against England; 30 Sail of Ships of the Line in France & as many in Spain were to be ready for the Sea by the beginning of April; 10000 Troops were ordered to march for Brest, the Destination of which was unknown; the Court of Great Britain had meanly solicited the Allies of France to guarantee Hanover against any Attack thro the Summer, & were refused; four Regiments were Raising in the prince of Hesse's Dominions, & in Consequence of Draughts on his Subjects an Insurrection took place; All the ports of France, Spain & Italy are open to Us upon the principles of neutrality; all Europe are in Favour of America, Russia & Portugal excepted & the little powers who have heretofore assisted G. Britain.

I wish to have it communicated to our Friends in Boston, that the

Tories in Philadelphia industriously circulate to their Disadvantage that there are few Whigs to be found in that once eminently patriotic Metropolis; & many Gentlemen who are Friends to the Cause confirm the report so far as to acknowledge, "that the Tories take possession of the most public places, & with great assurance express their Sentiments to the Disadvantage of our Cause." Will this be suffered by a people who have hazarded every Thing, & suffered so much in Support of their rights? Will they finally submit to be tantalized & disgraced by persons, whose Conduct is acknowledged by those whose Measures they subserve, to be unnatural & disgraceful to human Nature? Surely not. I hope soon to hear, that at a Meeting in Faneuil Hall, It is determined to follow the Example of Baltimore,<sup>4</sup> & that Boston is liberated from every Tory or suspicious Character in the place; this alone can make it happy, & as respectable as it once was & ought always to remain. I am sir in great Haste your assured Friend & most obed.

E Gerry

RC (MH-H). See above, pp. 513-14.

<sup>1</sup> For Congress' resolution of this date on former Paymaster General James Warren's accounts, see *JCC*, 7:212. The July 7 and September 17, 1776, letters to Gerry in which Warren discussed the subject of his accounts are in C. Harvey Gardiner, ed., *A Study in Dissent: The Warren-Gerry Correspondence, 1776-1792* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), pp. 39-44, 46-47. Gerry was a member of the Board of Treasury which advised Congress to adjust Warren's accounts.

<sup>2</sup> See *JCC*, 7:211.

<sup>3</sup> For the January 17 letter of the commissioners at Paris to the Committee of Secret Correspondence, see Wharton, *Diplomatic Correspondence*, 2:248-51.

<sup>4</sup> At this point Gerry inserted an asterisk keyed to the following sentence that he added in the margin. "The Whigg Club in Baltimore have lately banished from that Place every Tory & Suspected Character that could be found amongst them."

## INDEX

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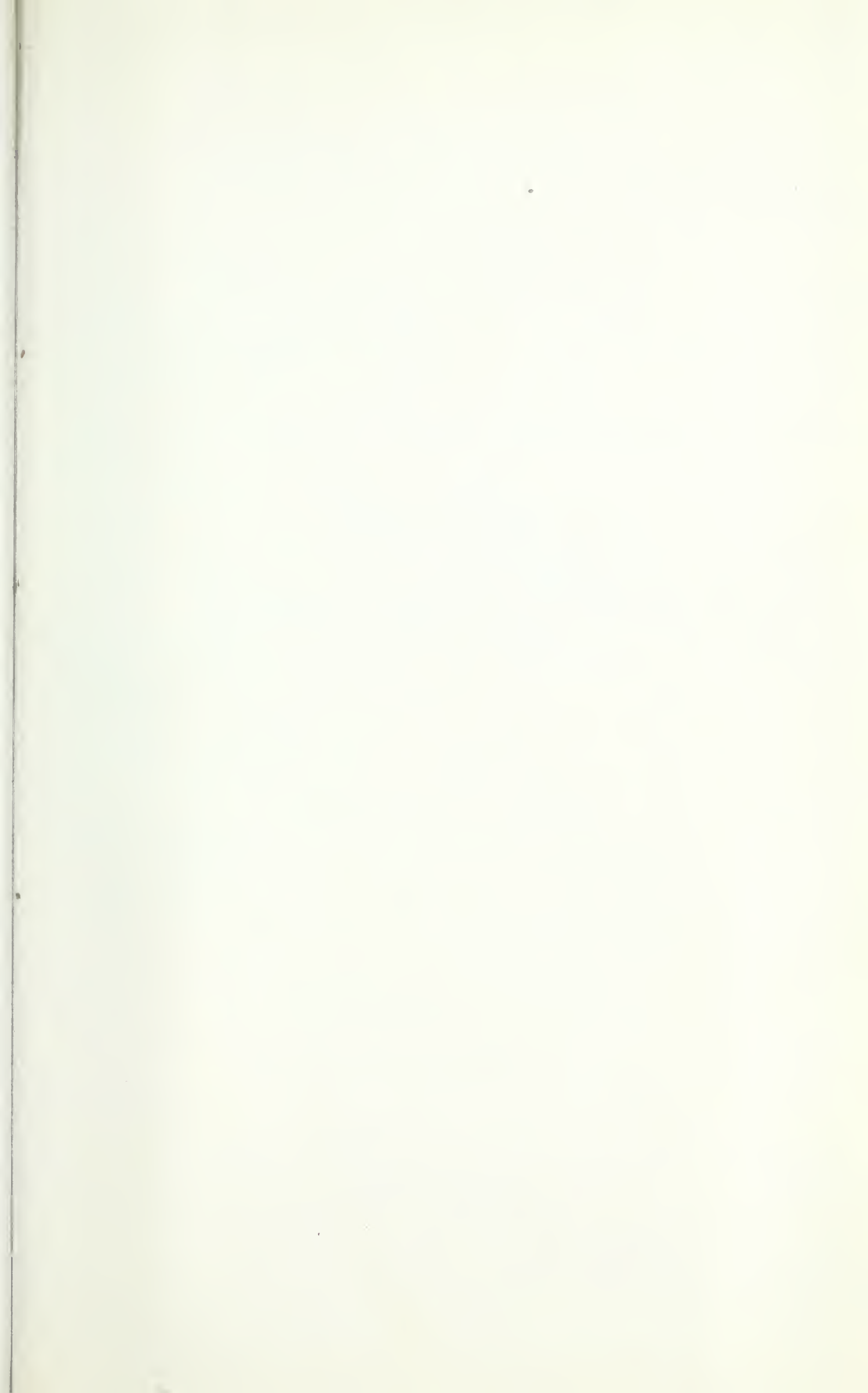
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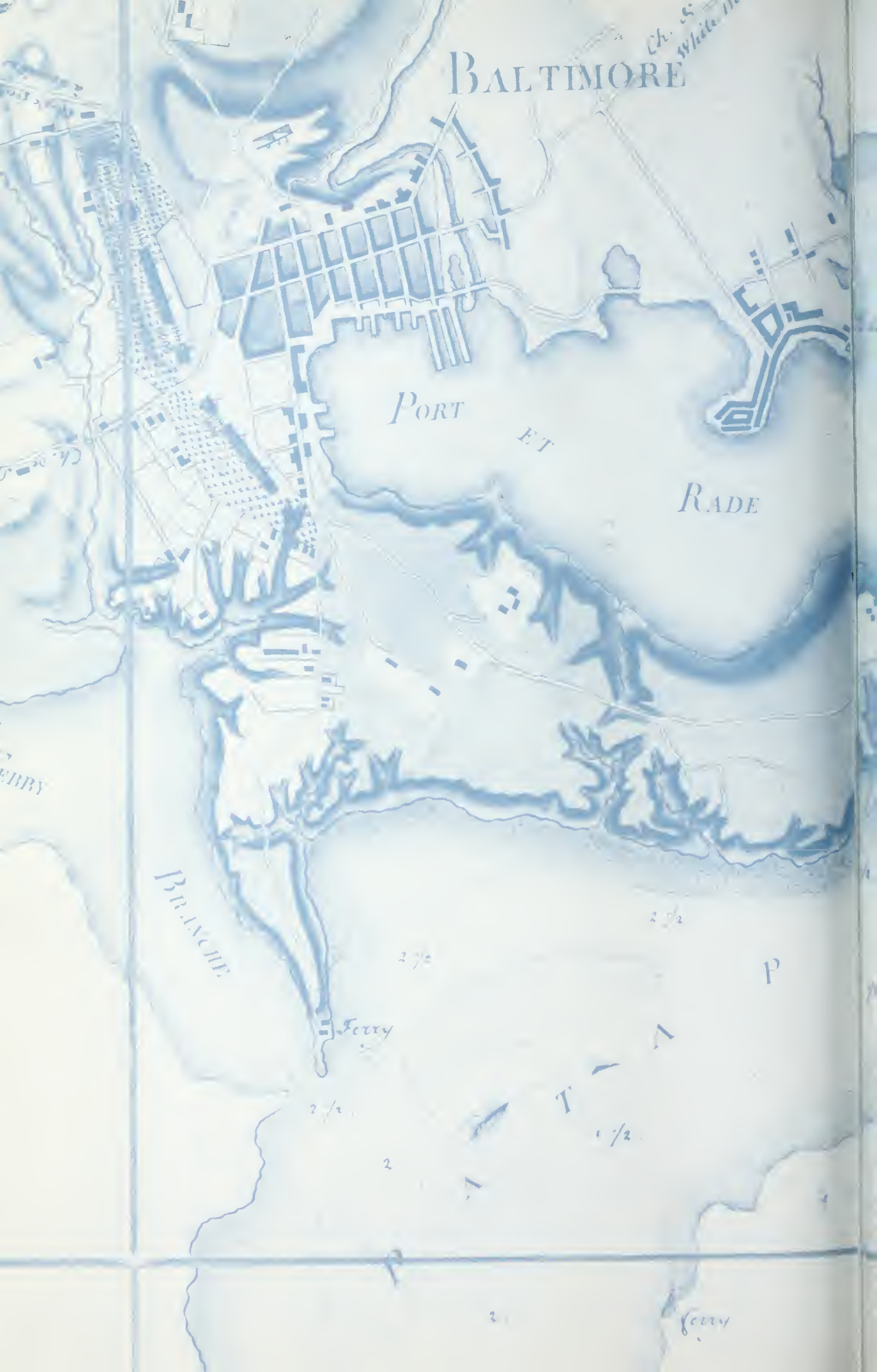
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